THE BRUISED REED, AND SMOKING FLAX

SOME SERMONS

Contracted out of *Mat.* 12.20.

At the desire, and for the good of weaker Christians.

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ZACH. 4.10.

Who hath despised the day of small things.

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John
Batt

John
Battman
1743

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE,
Sir *Horatio Vere*, Kt.
Lord *Vere* of *Tilbury*, and General of the *Engliſh* Forces under the High and Mighty Lords the States General of the United Provinces in the *Netherlands*.

And to his pious Conſort,
The Lady *Mary Vere*:
Increaſe of Grace; *&c.*

Right Honorable,

SOuldiers that carry their lives in their hands, had need above all others to carry grace in their hearts, that ſo having made peace with God, they may be fit to encounter with men. And having by faith in Chriſt diſarmed death

before they die, they may ſacrifice their lives with the more courage and comfort: which to neglect, being a matter of eternity, is not valour, but deſperate madneſs, becauſe in this buſineſs as in over-ſights of war, there is no place for a ſecond repentance, the firſt error being unrecoverable. In evils above the ſtrength of man to prevail againſt, and his patience to endure, there God hath planted the affection of fear, which might ſtir us up to avoid the danger by flying to him in *Chriſt*, who being our friend it is no matter who is our enemy: we may be killed, but cannot be hurt; ſo ſafe it is to be under his command, that hath command over Death, Hell, Judgment, and all that we moſt fear. Yet ſuch is our nature, that by familiarity with danger, we grow by degrees inſenſibly to be hardned againſt it,

it, and to look no further than death, as if to die were onely to give up the ghoſt, and then an end of all. And hereupon it is, that they that follow the wars, are generally taken to be men not moſt religious; the more reſpect thoſe of that Profeſſion deſerve, that have learned upon what terms to live and die, that are ſure of a better life before they leave *this*, that have laid up their life in Chriſt; Amongſt whom (Right Honourable) the World hath a long time taken notice of you, in whom both Religion and Military imployment, meekneſs of ſpirit with height of courage, humility with honor, by a rare and happy combination have met together. Whereby you have much vindicated your Profeſſion from common imputation, and ſhewed that Piety can enter into Tents, and follow

after Camps, and that God hath his *Joſhua*'s, and his *Corneliuſſes* in all ages. But I will not uſe many words of your ſelf, to your ſelf, becauſe though you have done much that may and will be ſpoken, yet you love not to hear, or ſpeak of what you have done.

It may ſeem to ſome unbefitting, to offer a Diſcourſe of a bruiſed Reed, to ſuch a ſtrong and flouriſhing Cedar. But experience ſheweth that the ſtrongeſt Plants in Gods houſe are expoſed ſometimes to ſtrong winds of temptation, and thereupon meet with bruiſings, that they may the better know by whoſe ſtrength they ſtand, and that the greateſt may learn to go out of themſelves to the ſame common rock and fountain of ſtrength with the meaneſt. *David* was a valiant man, yet upon experience of his oft failings and recoveries, he became

came towards God as a weaned child. Lowlineſs of mind to Godward, and greatneſs of ſpirit againſt his enemies, may wel ſtand together; for, the way to be above all other things, is to ſubmit to God firſt. Beſides, this Text ſpeaketh of the prevailing government of Chriſt in his Church and in his Children, which may be an incouragement to your Lordſhip ſtill, not onely to own the cauſe of Chriſt in theſe times, wherein men are aſhamed of what they ſhould glory in, and glory in their ſhame; but likewiſe to fight the Lords battels (when called to it) and help him againſt the mighty, for victory attendeth Chriſts ſide in the end. Though God, to revenge the quarrell of his covenant, ſuffers his enemies to prevail yet for a time, to harden them the more, yet they have undertaken a damned cauſe.

And

And howſoever the Church hath juſtly provoked God, yet the cauſe ſhall ſtand impregnable againſt all created power of Devils and Men. We naturally deſire victory, and many deſire it more then truth or goodneſs, which onely are victorious; and ſo out of a depraved judgment they croſs their own deſires, ſeeking to overcome in that wherein it were ſafer for them to be overcome. Theſe are ſure to meet with ſhame in the concluſion in ſtead of victory; or elſe we muſt deny Chriſt to be King of his Church, and Judge of the World. Proceed on ſtill (Honourable Lord) to ſtand for Chriſt both in Peace and Warre, and this ſhall be found to your Honor, when Chriſt ſhall come to be glorious in his Saints, that he thought you worthy to honor himſelf by, when others that oppoſe

oppoſe or betray the cauſe of Chriſt for baſe ends, ſhall not dare to hold up their heads.

I would not divide you from your Honorable Lady, being obliged to both; and both being one, as in other bands, ſo in that above nature, in love to the beſt things; both exemplary in all religious courſes, both in your places likewiſe having been imployed in great ſervices for the common good, ſo that not onely this, but forraign States are bound to bleſs *God* for you both. Going on in theſe wayes, you will find God making his promiſe good, of honoring them them that honor him.

I do not ſo far over-value this poor work, as to think it worthy of your Honors, but thus I thought meet to witneſs my deſerved reſpect to you both. If I be too blame for ſuffering theſe

Sermons long since preached, thus to come forth, others must divide the fault with me, who had brought it to that pass, that it was almost necessary for me to take this course. The Lord continue to blesse your Honors with all your branches, and to maintain his grace in you, until he hath brought forth judgment unto victory.

Your Honors

to command

in the Lord

RICHARD SIBBES.

To

To the Christian READER.

TO prevent a further inconvenience, I was drawn to let these notes pass with some review, considering there was an intendment of publishing them, by some who had not perfectly taken them; and these first, as being next at hand: and having had occasion lately of some fresh thoughts concerning this argument by dealing with some; the chief ground of whose trouble was the want of considering of the gracious nature and office of Christ; the right conceit of which is the spring of all service to Christ, and comfort from him. God hath laid up all grace and comfort in Christ for us, and planted a wonderful sweetness of pity and love in his heart towards us. As God his

Father

Father hath fitted him with a Body, *ſo with an heart to be a merciful Redeemer. What do the Scriptures ſpeak but Chriſts love and tender care over thoſe that are humbled: and beſides the mercy that reſteth in his own breaſt, he works the like impreſſion in his Miniſters and others,* to comfort the feeble-minded, and to bear with the weak. *Miniſters by their calling are friends of the Bride, and to bring Chriſt and his Spouſe together, and therefore ought upon all good occaſions to lay open all the excellencies of Chriſt, and amongſt others, as that he is highly born, mighty, one in whom all the treaſures of wiſdom are hid, &c. ſo likewiſe gentle, and of a good nature, and of a gracious diſpoſition. It cannot but cheer the heart of the Spouſe, to conſider in all her infirmities and miſeries ſhe is ſubject to, that ſhe hath an husband of a kinde diſpoſition, that knowes*

how

how to give the honor of milde uſage to the weaker veſſel; That will be ſo far from rejecting her, becauſe ſhe is weak, that he will pity her the more. And as he is kinde at all times, ſo eſpecially when it is moſt ſeaſonable, he will ſpeak to her heart, eſpecially in the Wilderneſs. *The more glory to God, and the more comfort to a Chriſtian ſoul ariſeth from the belief and application of theſe things, the more the enemy of Gods glory and mans comfort, labours to breed miſperſwaſions of them, that if he cannot keep men from Heaven, and bring them into that curſed condition he is in himſelf, yet he may trouble them in their paſſage; Some and none of the worſt, Satan prevailes withal ſo far, as to neglect the means, upon fear they ſhould (being ſo ſinful) diſhonor God and increaſe their ſins: and ſo they lie ſmothering under this temptation*

as

as it were bound hand and foot by Sathan, not daring to make out to Christ, and yet are secretly upheld by a spirit of faith, shewing it self in hidden sighes and grones unto God: These are abused by false representations of Christ; all whose wayes to such being wayes of mercy, and all his thoughts, thoughts of love: The more Sathan is malicious in keeping the soul in darknesse, the more care is to be had of establishing the soul upon that which will stay it. Amongst other grounds to build our faith on, as the free offer of grace to all that will receive it; the gracious invitation of all that are weary and heavy laden; those that have nothing to buy withal; The command binding to believe; the danger of not believing, being shut up prisoners thereby under the guilt of all other sins; the sweet intreaty to believe, and ordaining Embassadors to desire peace, putting ten-

Rev. 22. 17.
Mat. 11. 28.
Isa. 55. 1.
Joh. 3. 13.
Joh. 16. 9.
2 Cor. 5. 20.

tender affections into them answerable to their calling, ordaining Sacraments for the sealing of the covenant: Besides these (I say) and such moving inducements, this is one infusing vigour and strength into all the rest, that they proceed from Christ, a person authorized, and from those bowels that moved him not onely to become a man, but a curse for us; Hence it is, that he will not quench the smoking weik or flax. *It addes strength to faith, to consider, that all expressions of love issue from nature in Christ, which is constant. God knowes that as we are prone to sin, so when conscience is throughly awaked, we are as prone to despair for sin; and therefore he would have us know that he setteth himself in the Covenant of Grace to triumph in Christ over the greatest evils and enemies we fear, and that his thoughts are not as our thoughts* Esay 5.8.

are,

Hoſ. 11.9. *are, that he is God and not Man, that there are heights, and depthes,*
Eph. 3.18. *and breadths of mercy in him above all the depthes of our ſin and miſery; that we ſhould never be in ſuch a forlorn condition, wherein there ſhould be ground of deſpair, conſidering our ſins be the ſins of men, his mercy the mercy of an infinite God. But though it be a truth cleerer than the Sun-beams, that a broken-hearted ſinner ought to embrace mercy ſo ſtrongly enforced: yet there is no truth that the heart ſhutteth it ſelf more againſt, than this; eſpecially in ſenſe of miſery, when the ſoul is fitteſt for mercy, until the Holy Spirit ſprinkleth the conſcience with the blood of Chriſt, and ſheddeth his love into the heart, that ſo the blood of Chriſt in the conſcience may cry louder than the guilt of ſin; for onely Gods Spirit can raiſe the conſcience with comfort above guilt, becauſe he is onely*

great-

greater than the conſcience. Men may ſpeak comfort, but it is Chriſts Spirit that can onely comfort. Peace is the fruit of the lips, but yet created to be ſo. No creature can take off wrath from the conſcience, but he that ſet it on, though all the prevailing arguments be uſed that can be brought forth, till the Holy Ghoſt effectually perſwadeth by a divine kind of Rhetorick, which ought to raiſe up our hearts to him who is the comforter of his people, that he would ſeal them to our ſoules. Now God dealing with men as underſtanding creatures, the manner which he uſeth in this powerful work upon their conſciences, is by way of friendly entercourſe, as intreaty, and perſwaſion, and diſcovery of his love in Chriſt, and Chriſts gracious inclination thus even to the weakeſt and loweſt of men. And therefore becauſe he is pleaſed by ſuch like motives to enter

Loquitur Deus ad modum noſtrum, agit ad modum ſuum.

ter into the heart and ſettle a peace there, we ought with reverence to regard all ſuch ſanctified helps, and among the reſt this of making uſe of this comfortable deſcription of Chriſt by God the Father, in going boldly in all neceſſities to the throne of grace. But we muſt know this comfort is onely the portion of thoſe that give up themſelves to Chriſts government, that are willing in all things to be diſpoſed of by him. For here we ſee in this Scripture both joyned together, mercy to bruiſed reeds, and yet government prevailing by degrees over corruptions. Chriſt ſo favoureth weak ones, as that he frameth their ſoules to a better condition than they are in. Neither can it be otherwiſe, but that a ſoul looking for mercy ſhould ſubmit it ſelf at the ſame time to be guided. Thoſe relations of husband, head, ſhepherd, &c. imply not onely meekneſſe and mer-

cy,

cy, but government likewise. When we become Christians to purpose, we live not exempt from all service, but onely we change our Lord. Therefore if any in an ill course of life snatch comforts before they are reached out unto them, let them know they do it at their own perils. It is as if some ignorant man should come into an Apothecaries shop stored with variety of medicines of all sorts, and should take what comes next to hand, Poyson perhaps instead of Physick. There is no word of comfort in the whole book of God intended for such as regard iniquity in their hearts, *though they do not act it in their lives.* Psal. 66. 18. *Their onely comfort is that the sentence of damnation is not executed, and thereupon there is yet opportunity of safer thoughts and resolutions, otherwise they stand not onely convicted, but condemned by the word; and Christ* that rideth on Rev. 6. 2. the

the white horſe *will ſpend all his arrowes upon them, and wound them to death. If any ſhall bleſſe himſelf in an ill way, Gods wrath ſhall burn to Hell againſt ſuch: There is no more comfort to be expected from Chriſt, than there is care to pleaſe him. Otherwiſe to make him an abetter of a lawleſſe and looſe life, is to transform him into a fancie, nay into the likeneſſe of him whoſe works he came to deſtroy, which is the moſt deteſtable idolatry of all. One way whereby the Spirit of Chriſt prevaileth in his, is to preſerve them from ſuch thoughts; yet we ſee people will frame a Divinity to themſelves, pleaſing to the fleſh, ſuitable to their own ends, which being vain in the ſubſtance, will prove likewiſe vain in the fruit, and as a building upon the ſand.*

The main ſcope of all, is to allure us to the entertainment of

Chriſts

Christs milde, safe, wise, victorious government, and to leave men naked of all pretences, why they will not have Christ to rule over them, when we see salvation not onely strongly wrought, but sweetly dispensed by him. His government is not for his own pleasure, but for our good. We are saved by a way of love, that love might be kindled by this way in us to God again; because this affection melteth the soul, and moldeth it to all duty and acceptable manner of performance of duty. It is love in duties that God regards more then duties themselves. This is the true and Evangelical disposition arising from Christ's love to us, and our love to him again; and not to fear to come to him, as if we were to take an Elephant by the tooth. It is almost a fundamental mistake, to think that God delights in slavish fears, when as

the

the fruits of Christs kingdome are peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; for from this mistake come weak, slavish, superstitious conceits.

Two things trouble the peace of Christians very much; Their
1. *weaknesses hanging upon them;*
2. *and Fear of holding out for time to come. A remedy against both is in this Text, for Christ is set out here as a milde Saviour to weak ones; and for time to come, his powerful care and love is never interrupted, until he bring forth judgment to victory. And thereupon it is that both the means of salvation and grace wrought by means, and glory the perfection of grace, come all under one name of the KINGDOME OF GOD so oft; because whom by means he brings to grace, he will by grace bring to glory.*

This makes the thoughts of the lat-

latter judgment comfortable unto us, that he who is then to be our Judge, cannot but judge for them who have been ruled by him here; for whom he guides by his counsel, those he brings to glory. If our faith were but as firm as our state in CHRIST is secure and glorious, what manner of men should we be?

If I had gone about to affect writing in an high strain, I should have missed of mine end, and crossed the argument in hand. For shall we that are servants quench those weak sparks which our Lord himself is pleased to cherish? I had rather hazard the censure of some, than hinder the good of others; which if it be any wayes furthered by these few observations, I have what I aimed at. I intended not a Treatise, but opening of a Text; what I shall be drawn to do in this kind must be

by

by degrees, as leisure in the midst of many interruptions will permit: The Lord guide our hearts, tongues, and pens, for his glory, and the good of his people.

RICHARD SIBBES.

THE

THE BRUISED REED, AND SMOKING FLAX.

MAT. 12. 20.
A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoking flax ſhall he not quench, till he ſend forth judgment unto victory.

CHAP. I.

The Text opened and divided. What the reed *is, and what the* bruiſing.

THE Prophet *Eſay* being lifted up, and carryed with the wing of prophetical ſpirit, paſſeth over all the time between

Cap. 1. him, and the appearing of Jesus Christ in the flesh, and seeth with the eye of prophesie, and with the eye of faith, Christ as present, and presenteth him in the name of God to the spiritual eye of others, in these words, *Behold my servant whom I have chosen, &c.* Which place is alledged by Saint *Matthew*, as fulfilled now in Christ. Wherein is propounded,

Division First, the calling of Christ to his office:

Secondly, the execution of it.

For his calling: God styleth him here his *righteous servant, &c.* Christ was Gods servant in the greatest piece of service that ever was; a chosen, and a choise servant: he did and suffered all by commission from the Father: wherein we may see the sweet love of God to us, that counts the work of our salvation by Christ, his greatest service. And

that

that he will put his onely beloved Son to that ſervice. He might well prefix [*Behold*] to raiſe up our thoughts to the higheſt pitch of attention and admiration. In time of temptation, miſgiving conſciences look ſo much to the preſent trouble they are in, that they need be rouzed up to behold him in whom they may find reſt for their diſtreſſed ſouls: In temptations it is ſafeſt to behold nothing but Chriſt the true *brazen Serpent, the true Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world.* This ſaving object hath a ſpeciall influence of comfort into the ſoule, eſpecially if we look not onely on Chriſt, but upon the Fathers authority and love in him. For in all that Chriſt did and ſuffered as Mediator, we muſt ſee *God in him reconciling the world unto himſelf.* Cap. 1. Joh. 1. 29. 2 Cor. 5. 19

Cap. 1. What a ſupport to our Faith is this, That GOD the Father, the party offended by our ſins, is ſo *well pleaſed* with the work of Redemption? And what a comfort is this, that ſeeing Gods love reſteth on Chriſt, as well pleaſed in him, we may gather that he is as well pleaſed with us, if we be in Chriſt? For his love reſteth in *whole* Chriſt, in Chriſt myſtical, as well as Chriſt natural, becauſe he loveth him and us with one love. Let us therefore imbrace Chriſt, and in him Gods love, and build our faith ſafely on ſuch a Saviour, that is furniſhed with ſo high a Commiſſion.

See here (for our comfort) a ſweet agreement of all three perſons: The Father giveth a commiſſion to Chriſt: The Spirit furniſheth and ſanctifieth to it: Chriſt himſelfe executeth the office

office of a Mediator. Our Re- Cap. 1.
demption is founded upon the
joynt agreement of all three per-
ſons of the Trinity.

For the execution of this his 2
calling, it is ſet down here to
be modeſt, without making a
noiſe, or raiſing duſt by any
pompous comming, as Princes
uſe to doe: [*His voice ſhall not
be heard*] his voice indeed was
heard, but what voice? *Come un-* Mat. 11. 28
*to me all ye that are weary and hea-
vy laden*: He cryed, but how?
Ho, every one that thirſteth, come, Iſa. 55. 1.
&c. And as his comming was
modeſt, ſo it was mild, which
is ſet down in theſe words, *The
bruiſed Reed ſhall he not break*:
Wherein we may obſerve theſe
three things:

Firſt, the condition of thoſe 1
that Chriſt had to deal withall:
1. They were *bruiſed Reeds.*
2. *Smoking flax.*

Cap. 1. 2 Secondly, Christs carriage toward them, he *brake not* the bruised reed, nor *quenched* the smoking flax: where more is meant than spoken; for he will not only break the bruised Reed, nor quench, &c. but he will cherish them.

3 Thirdly, the constancy and progresse of this his tender care, *untill judgment come to victory*, that is, untill the sanctified frame of grace begun in their hearts, be brought to that perfection, that it prevaileth over all opposite corruption.

1 The condition of such as Christ had to deal with.

For the first, the condition of men whom he was to deal withall, is, that they were *bruised reeds*, and *smoking flax*; not *trees*, but *reeds*; and not *whole*, but *bruised* reeds. The Church is compared to weak things; to a *Dove* amongst the Fowles; to a *Vine* amongst the Plants; to *Sheep* amongst

The Church likened to weak things.

amongſt the Beaſts, to a *Woman*, Cap. 1. which is the *weaker veſſell*: and here Gods children are compared to *bruiſed reeds* and *ſmoking flax*. Firſt, we will ſpeak of them as they are bruiſed Reeds, and then as ſmoking Flax.

They are bruiſed Reeds before their converſion, and oftentimes after: Before converſion all (except ſuch as being bred up in the Church, God hath delighted to ſhew himſelf gracious unto from their Childhood) yet in different degrees, as God ſeeth meet; and as difference is in regard of temper, parts, manner of life, &c. ſo in Gods intendment of imployment for the time to come: for uſually he empties ſuch of themſelves, and makes them nothing, before he will uſe them in any great ſervices.

This bruiſed Reed is a man, that for the moſt part is in ſome Bruiſed Reed, what.

Cap. 1. miſery, as thoſe were, that came
1 to CHRIST for help, and
2 (2) by miſery is brought to ſee
ſinne the cauſe of it; For what-
ſoever pretences ſinne maketh,
yet bruiſing or breaking is the
3 end of it: (3) he is ſenſible of
ſinne and miſery, even unto brui-
4 ſing: and (4) ſeeing no help in
himſelf, is carryed with reſtleſſe
deſire to have ſupply from ano-
ther, with ſome hope, which a
little raiſeth him out of himſelf
to Chriſt; though he dareth
not claim any preſent intereſt of
mercy. This ſpark of hope be-
ing oppoſed by doubtings, and
fears riſing from corruption, ma-
keth him as ſmoking Flax; ſo
that both theſe together, *A bruiſed Reed*, and *ſmoking Flax*,
make up the ſtate of a poore di-
ſtreſſed man; ſuch an one as our
Mat. 5 3. Saviour Chriſt termeth *poore in ſpirit*, who ſeeth a want, and
withall

withall ſeeth himſelf indebted to Divine Juſtice, and no means of ſupply from himſelf or the creature, and thereupon mourns, and upon ſome hope of mercy from the Promiſe, and examples of thoſe that have obtained mercy, is ſtirred up to hunger and thirſt after it. Cap. 2.

CHAP. II.

Thoſe that Chriſt hath to doe withall, are bruiſed.

THis bruiſing is required before Converſion, that ſo the Spirit may make way for it ſelf into the heart, by *levelling all proud high thoughts*, and that we may underſtand our ſelves to be, what indeed we are by nature. We love to wander from our ſelves, and to be ſtrangers at home, till God bruiſeth us by 1

Why bruiſing is requiſite. 1. Before converſion.

Cap. 2. one croſſe or other, and then we
Luk. 15. 17 *bethink our ſelves, and come home to our ſelves with the Prodigall.*

A marvellous hard thing it is, to bring a dull and a ſhifting heart to cry with feeling for mercy. Our hearts (like Malefactors) until they be beaten from all ſhifts, never cry for the mercy of the
2 Judge. Again, this bruiſing maketh us ſet a high price upon Chriſt; the Goſpel is the Goſpel indeed then, then the fig-leaves of morality will doe us no good:
3 and it maketh us more thankful, and from thankfulneſſe more
4 fruitfull in our lives; For what maketh many ſo cold and barren, but that bruiſing for ſin never indeared Gods Grace unto them? Likewiſe this dealing of God doth eſtabliſh us the more in his wayes, having had knocks and bruiſings in our own wayes. This is the cauſe oft of relapſes

and

and apoſtaſies, becauſe men ne- Cap. 2
ver ſmarted for ſin at the firſt, they were not long enough under the laſh of the Law. Hence this inferiour work of the Spirit, in *bringing down high thoughts*, is neceſſary before converſion. And for the moſt part, the holy Spirit, to further the work of conviction, joyneth ſome affliction, which ſanctified, hath a healing and purging power.

Nay, after converſion we 2. After converſion
need bruiſing. That reeds may
know themſelves to be reeds, and
not Oaks; even Reeds need
bruiſing by reaſon of the remainder of pride in our nature, and to
let us ſee, that we live by mercy.
And that weaker Chriſtians may
not be too much diſcouraged,
when they ſee ſtronger ſhaken
and bruiſed. Thus *Peter* was
bruiſed when he *wept bitterly*.
This reed, till he met with this
bruiſe,

Cap. 2. bruiſe had more wind in him
Mat. 26. 35. then pith. *Though all forſake thee, I will not, &c.* The people of God cannot be without theſe examples. The Heroicall deeds of thoſe great Worthies do not comfort the Church ſo much, as
Pſal. 32. 3, 5. their falls and bruiſes do. Thus *David* was bruiſed, untill he came to a free confeſſion without *guile* of ſpirit: nay, his ſorrows did riſe in his own feeling, unto the
Pſal. 51. 8. exquiſite pain of *breaking of*
Iſa. 38. 13. *bones.* Thus *Hezekiah* complaines, that God had *broken his bones as a Lion.* Thus the choſen
1 Cor. 12. 7 veſſell S. *Paul* needed the meſſenger of Sathan to buffet him, leſt he ſhould be lifted up above meaſure.

Uſe. Hence we learn, that we muſt
to be not paſſe too harſh judgment upon our ſelves, or others, when God doth exerciſe us with bruiſing upon bruiſing; There muſt

be

be a conformity to our head Christ, who *was bruiſed for us*; that we may know how much we are bound unto him. Profane ſpirits, ignorant of Gods wayes in bringing his children to Heaven, cenſure broken-hearted Chriſtians for deſperate perſons, when as God is about a gracious good work with them. It is no eaſy matter to bring a man from Nature to Grace, and from Grace to Glory; ſo unyeelding and untractable are our hearts. Cap. 3. Iſa. 53. 5.

CHAP.

Cap. 3.

CHAP. III.
Christ will not break the bruised Reed.

2 *Point.* THe second point is, *That Christ will not break the bruised Reed.* Physicians, though they put their Patients to much pain, yet they wil not destroy Nature, but raise it up by degrees. Chirurgions will launce and cut, but not dismember. A mother that hath a sick and froward child, will not therefore cast it away; and shall there be more mercy in the Stream than in the Spring? shall we think there is more mercy in our selves, than in God, who planteth the affection of mercy in us? But for further declaration of Christs mercy to all bruised Reeds, Consider the comfortable relations he hath taken upon him of *Husband, Shepherd,*

Bro-

Brother, &c. which he will diſ- Cap. 2
charge to the utmoſt; for ſhall
others by his grace fulfill what
he calleth them unto, and not he
that (out of his love) hath taken
upon him theſe relations, ſo
throughly founded upon his Fa-
thers aſſignment, and his own vo-
luntary undertaking? Conſider
his borrowed Names from the
mildeſt creatures, as *Lamb, Hen,*
&c. to ſhew his tender care:
Conſider his very name, JESUS,
a *Saviour*, given him by GOD
himſelf: Conſider his Office, an-
ſwerable to his Name; which is,
that he ſhould *heal the broken-*
hearted. At his Baptiſme the ho- Eſay 61.
ly Ghoſt ſate on him in the ſhape
of a *Dove*, to ſhew that he ſhould
be a Dove-like gentle Mediator.
See the gracious manner of exe-
cuting his offices; as a *Prophet*,
he came with bleſſing in his
mouth, *Bleſſed be the poore in ſpi-* Mat. 5.
rit,,

Cap. 3. *rit, &c.* and invited those to come to him, whose hearts suggested most exceptions against
Mat. 11. 28 themselves, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* How did his bowels yern, when
Mat. 9. 36. *he saw the people as sheep without a Shepherd?* He never turned any back again that came unto him, though some went away of themselves. He came to die as a *Priest* for his enemies: In the dayes of his flesh he dictated a Form of Prayer unto his Disciples, and put Petitions unto God into their mouthes, and his Spirit to intercede in their hearts; and now makes Intercession in Heaven for weak Christians, standing between Gods anger and them; and shed tears for those that shed his bloud: so he is *a meek King*, he will admit mourners into his presence, a King of poor and afflicted persons:

ſons: as he hath beams of Majeſty, ſo he hath bowels of mercies and compaſſion: A *Prince of peace.* Why was he *tempted*, but *that he might ſuccour thoſe that are tempted?* What mercy may we not expect from ſo gracious a *Mediator*, that took our nature upon him that he might be gracious? he is a *Phyſitian* good at all diſeaſes, eſpecially at the binding up of a broken heart: He dyed that he might heal our ſouls with a plaſter of his own blood, and by that death ſave us, which we were the procurers of our ſelves, by our own ſins; and hath he not the ſame bowels in heaven? *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* cryed the Head in heaven, when the foot was troden on on earth. His *advancemẽt* hath not made him forget his own fleſh: though it has freed him frõ *paſſion*, yet not frõ *compaſſion* towards us.

Cap. 3.
Eſay 9. 6.
Heb. 2. 18.
1 Tim. 2 5
Acts 9 4.

The

Cap. 3. The Lion of the tribe of *Judah* will onely teare in pieces those
Luk. 19. 27 that *will not have him rule over them.* He will not shew his strength against those that prostrate themselves before him.

Use 1. Incouragement to the bruised. What should we learn from hence, but *to come boldly to the throne of Grace* in all our grievances? Shall our sins discourage us, when he appears there onely for sinners? Art thou bruised? Be of good comfort, he calleth thee; conceal not thy wounds, open all before him, keep not Satans counsell. Goe to Christ though trembling; (as the poore
Mat. 9. 20. woman) if we can but *touch the hem of his garment,* we shall be healed, and have a gracious answer: *Goe boldly to God* in our flesh; for this end that we might goe boldly to him, he is *flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone.* Never fear to goe to God, since we have

have ſuch a Mediatour with him, Cap. 3.
that is not onely our Friend, but
our Brother and Husband. Well
might the Angels proclaim from
heaven, *Behold, we bring you ti-* Luk. 2. 10.
dings of joy: well might the A-
poſtle ſtir us up to *rejoyce in the* Phil. 4. 4.
Lord again and again: he was
well adviſed upon what grounds
he did it: peace and joy are two
main fruits of his kingdome. Let
the world be as it will, if we can-
not rejoyce in the world, yet we
may rejoyce in the Lord. His
preſence maketh any condition
comfortable. *Be not afraid* (ſaith Mat. 14. 27
he to his Diſciples when they
were afraid as if they had ſeen a
Ghoſt) *it is I*; as if there were
no cauſe of feare where he is pre-
ſent.

Let this ſtay us, when we feele *Uſe 2.*
our ſelves bruiſed; CHRIST his Deſpair
courſe is firſt to wound, then to not in thy
heal; No ſound whole ſoul ſhall bruiſings.

ever

Cap. 3. ever enter into Heaven. Think in temptation, Christ was tempted for me; according to my tryals will be my Graces and comforts. If Christ be so mercifull as not to break me, I will not break my selfe by Despaire, nor yeeld my selfe over to the roaring Lyon Satan to break me in pieces.

Vse 3. See the contrary to this in Satan.

Thirdly, see the contrary disposition of Christ, and Satan, and his instruments. Satan setteth upon us when we are weakest, as *Simeon* and *Levi* upon the *Sichemites*, *when they were sore*: But Christ will make up in us all the breaches sinne and Satan have made: he *bindes up the broken-hearted*. And as a mother tendreth most the most diseased and weakest childe; so doth Christ most mercifully incline to the weakest; and likewise putteth an instinct into the weakest things

Gen. 34. 25

things to rely upon ſomething ſtronger then themſelves for ſupport. The Vine ſtayeth it ſelf upon the Elme; and the weakeſt creatures have oft the ſtrongeſt ſhelters. The conſciouſneſſe of the Churches weakneſſe makes her willing to lean on her Beloved, and to hide her ſelf under his wing. Cap. 4.

CHAP. IV.

Signs of one truely bruiſed. Means and meaſure of bruiſing: and comfort to ſuch.

BUt how ſhall we know, whether we are ſuch as thoſe that may expect mercy? *Object.*

By *bruiſing* here is not meant thoſe that are brought low onely by croſſes, but ſuch as by them are brought to ſee their ſinne, which bruiſeth moſt of all. When Conſcience is under the guilt *Anſw.*

of

Cap. 4. of sinne, then every judgement brings a report of Gods anger to the soul, and all lesse troubles run into this great trouble of conscience for sin. As all corrupt humours run to the diseased and bruised part of the body: And as every Creditor falls upon the Debtor, when he is once arrested; so when Conscience is once awaked, all former sins and present crosses joyn together to make the bruise the more painfull: Now he that is thus bruised will be content with nothing but with mercy from him that hath bruised him, *He hath wounded, and he must heal.* Lord thou hast bruised me deservedly for my sins, bind up my heart again, &c. 2. Again, a man truly bruised, judgeth sin the greatest evill, and the favour of God the greatest good. 3. He had rather hear of Mercy then of a Kingdome.

Eight signs of one truly bruised.

2

3

4

dome. 4. He hath mean conceits of himſelf, and thinketh he is not worth the earth he treads on. 5 Towards others he is not cenſorious, as being taken up at home, but is ful of ſympathy & compaſſion to thoſe that are under Gods hand. He thinketh thoſe that walk in the comforts of Gods Spirit the happieſt men of the world. 7 He *trembleth at the word of God*, and honoureth the very *feet of thoſe* bleſſed inſtruments *that bring peace* unto him. 8 He is more taken up with the inward exerciſes of a broken heart, than with formality, and yet carefull to uſe all ſanctified meanes to convey comfort. Cap. 4. 5 6 7 Iſa. 66. 2. Rō. 10. 15. 8

Queſt. But how ſhall we come to have this temper?

Anſw. First, we muſt conceive of bruſing either as a ſtate into which God bringeth us, or as a duty to be performed by us: both are

Means of bruiſing, five. 1

Cap. 4. are here meant; we muſt joyn with God in bruiſing of our ſelves; when he humbles us, let us humble our ſelves, and not ſtand out againſt him, for then he will redouble his ſtrokes; and let
2 us juſtifie Chriſt in all his chaſtiſements, knowing that all his dealing towards us is to cauſe us to returne into our own hearts; his work in bruiſing, tendeth to our
3 work in bruiſing our ſelves. Let us lament our own untowardneſs, and ſay, Lord, what an heart have I, that needs all this, that none of this could be ſpared? we muſt lay ſiege to the hardneſs of our own hearts, and aggravate ſin
4 all we can: we muſt look on Chriſt, who was bruiſed for us, look on him whom we have pierced with our ſins. But all directions will not prevail, unleſs God by his Spirit convinceth us deeply, ſetting our ſins before us, and driving

driving us to a ſtand. Then we will make out for mercy. Conviction will breed contrition, and this, humiliation. Therefore deſire God, that he would bring a cleer & a ſtrong light into all the corners of our ſoules, and accompany it with a ſpirit of power to lay our hearts low. Cap. 4.

A ſet meaſure of bruiſing our ſelves cannot be preſcribed; yet it muſt be ſo far, as 1. we may prize Chriſt above all, and ſee that a Saviour muſt be had: And 2. untill we reform that which is amiſs, though it be to the cutting off our right hand, or pulling out our right eye. There is a dangerous ſlighting of the work of humiliation; ſome alledging this for a pretence for their overly dealing with their own hearts, that Chriſt will not break the bruiſed Reed; But ſuch muſt know, that every ſudden terrour Meaſure of bruiſing. 1.

Cap. 4. and short grief is not that which makes us bruised Reeds; not a *little hanging down our heads like a* Esay 58.5. *bulrush*, but a working our hearts to such a grief, as will make sin more odious unto us then punishment; Untill we offer an holy violence against it: else favouring our selves, we make work for God to bruise us, and for sharp repentance afterwards. It is dangerous (I confess) in some cases with some spirits, to presse too much and too long this bruising; because they may dye under the wound and burthen, before they be raised up again. Therefore it is good in mixt assemblies to mingle comfort, that every soul may have its due portion. But if we lay this for a ground, that there is more mercy in Christ, than sin in us, there can be no danger in through-dealing. It is better to go bruised to Heaven, than

than ſound to Hell. Therefore Cap. 4.
let us not take off our ſelves too ſoon, nor pull off the plaiſter before the cure be wrought, but keep our ſelves under this work till ſin be the ſowreſt, and Chriſt the ſweeteſt of all things. And when Gods hand is upon us in any kind, it is good to divert our ſorrow for other things, to the root of all, which is ſin: let our grief run moſt in that channell, that as ſin bred grief, ſo grief may conſume ſin.

But are we not bruiſed unleſſe *Quæſt.*
we grieve more for ſin then we do for puniſhment?

Sometimes our grief from *Anſw.*
outward grievances may lie heavier upon the ſoul, then grief for Gods diſpleaſure; becauſe in ſuch caſes the grief works upon the whole man, both outward and inward, and hath nothing to ſtay it, but a little ſpark of faith:

Cap. 4. which by reaſon of the violent impreſſion of the grievance, is ſuſpended in the exerciſes of it: and this is moſt felt in ſudden diſtreſſes which come upon the ſoul as a torrent or land-floud, and eſpecially in bodily diſtempers, which by reaſon of the ſympathy between the ſoul and the body, work upon the ſoul ſo far, as they hinder not only the ſpirituall, but often the naturall acts. Hereupon Saint *James* wiſheth in affliction to pray our ſelves, but in caſe of ſickneſſe to
Jam. 5. 14. *ſend for the Elders*; that may, as thoſe in the Goſpel, offer up the ſick perſon to God in their prayers, being unable to preſent their
Pſal. 6. own caſe. Hereupon God admitteth of ſuch a plea from the ſharpneſſe aud bitterneſſe of the grievance, as in *David, Pſal. 6. &c. The Lord knoweth whereof we*
Pſ. 103. 14. *are made, he remembreth we are but*

but duſt, that our ſtrength is not the ſtrength of ſteel. It is a branch of his faithfulneſſe unto us as his creatures, whence he is called *a faithfull Creator*; *God is faithfull, who will not ſuffer us to be tempted above that we are able.* There were certain Commandments which the Jews called the hedges of the Law: as to fence men off from cruelty, he commanded they ſhould not *take the dam with the young, nor ſeeth the Kid in the mothers milk, nor muzzle the mouth of the Oxe.* Hath God care of beaſts, and not of his more noble creature? and therefore we ought to judge charitably of the complaints of Gods people, wch are wrung from them in ſuch caſes: *Iob* had the eſteem wth God of a patient man, notwithſtāding thoſe paſſionat cōplaints; faith overborn for the preſent, will get ground again; and grief for

Cap. 5.

1 Pet. 4. 19. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Exod. 23. 19. 1 Cor. 6. 9

Cap. 4. ſin, although it come ſhort of grief for miſery, in violence, yet it goeth beyond it in conſtancy; as a running ſtream fed with a Spring holdeth out, when a ſudden ſwelling Brook faileth.

Who are fit for comfort.

For the concluding of this point, and our incouragement to a thorow work of bruiſing, and patience under Gods bruiſing of us, let all know, that none are fitter for comfort then thoſe that think themſelves furtheſt off. Men (for the moſt part) are not loſt enough in their own feeling, for a Saviour. An holy deſpair in our ſelves is the ground of true hope. In God, the fatherleſſe finde mercy: if men were more fatherleſs, they ſhould feel more Gods fatherly affection from heaven: For God that *dwelleth in the higheſt heavens*, dwelleth likewiſe in the loweſt ſoul. Chriſts ſheep are weak ſheep, and want-

Hoſ. 14. 3.

Iſa 66. 2.

wanting in ſomething or other; Cap. 4.
he therefore applyeth himſelf to
the neceſſities of every ſheep:
He ſeeks that which was loſt, and Ez. 34. 15.
brings again that which was driven
out of the way, and binds up that
which was broken, and ſtrengthens
the weak: his tendereſt care is over
the weakeſt. The Lambs he car- Eſ. 40. 11.
ryeth in his boſome: *Peter, feed*
my Lambs. He was moſt fami-
liar and open to the troubled
ſouls. How carefull was he that
Peter and the reſt of the Apoſtles
ſhould not be too much dejected
after his Reſurrection? *Goe tell*
the Diſciples, and tell Peter: Mar. 16. 7.
Chriſt knew that guilt of their
unkindneſſe in leaving of him,
had dejected their ſpirits. How
gently did he endure *Thomas* his
unbelief? and ſtooped ſo farre
unto his weakneſſe, as to ſuffer
him to thruſt his hand into his
ſide.

Chap. V.

Grace is little at first.

The second branch.

For the second branch; God will not quench the smoking Flax, or wieke, but will blow it up till it flameth. In smoking flax there is but a little light, and that weak, as being not able to flame, and this little mixed with smoke.

The observations hence are first, That in Gods Children, especially in their first conversion, there is but a little measure of grace, and that little mixt with much corruption, which, as smoke, is offensive. Secondly, that *Christ* will not quench this smoking Flax.

Observ. For the first, *Grace is little at the first.* There are severall Ages in Christians, some Babes, some young men: Grace is as *a grain of Mustardseed.* Nothing so little

Mat. 17. 20.

as

as grace at firſt, and nothing more glorious afterward: things of greateſt perfection are longeſt in coming to their growth. Man, the perfecteſt creature, comes to perfection by little and little; Worthleſſe things, as Muſhroms, and the like, like *Jonas Gourd*, ſoon ſpring up, and ſoon vaniſh. A new creature is the moſt excellent frame in all the world, therefor it groweth up by degrees; We ſee in nature, that a mighty Oake riſeth of an Akorne. It is with a Chriſtian as it was with *Chriſt*, who ſprang out of the dead ſtock of *Jeſſe*, out of *Davids* family, when it was at the loweſt, but he grew up higher then the heavens. It is not with the trees of righteouſneſs, as it was with the trees of Paradiſe, which were created all perfect at the firſt. The ſeeds of all the creatures in this goodly frame of the world, were

Cap. 5.

Iſa. 53. 2.

Cap. 5. were hid in the Chaos, in that confused mass at the first, out of which God did command all creatures to arise; in the small seeds of plants lye hid both bulk and branches, bud and fruit. In a few principles lye hid all comfortable conclusions of holy truth. All those glorious fire-works of zeal and holinesse in the Saints, had their beginning from a few sparks.

Use. Be not discouraged at small beginnings. Eph. 1. 4.

Let us not therefore be discouraged at the small beginnings of Grace, but look on our selves, as *elected to be blameless, and without spot*. Let us onely look on our imperfect beginning, to enforce further strife to perfection, and to keep us in a low conceit. Otherwise, in case of discouragement, we must consider our selves, as Christ doth, who looks on us as such as he intendeth to fit for himself. Christ valueth us by

by what we ſhall be, and by that we are elected unto. We call a little plant a Tree, becauſe it is growing up to be ſo. *Who is he that deſpiſeth the day of little things?* Chriſt would not have us deſpiſe little things. Cap. 3 Zech. 4. 10

The glorious Angels diſdain not attendance on little ones; little in their own eyes, and little in the eyes of the world.

Grace, though little in quantity, yet is much in vigour and worth.

It is Chriſt that raiſeth the worth of little and mean places and perſons. *Bethleem the leaſt*, and yet not the leaſt; the leaſt in it ſelf, not the leaſt in reſpect Chriſt was born there. The *ſecond Temple* came ſhort of the outward magnificence of the former, yet more glorious then the firſt, becauſe Chriſt came into it. The Lord of the Temple came Mic. 5. 2. Mat. 2. 6. Hag. 2. 9.

into

Cap. 6. into his own Temple. The pupil of the eye is very little, yet seeth a great part of the heaven at once. A pearl, though little, yet is of much esteem: Nothing in the world of so good use, as the least dram of Grace.

Chap. VI.

Grace is mingled with corruption.

But Grace is not onely little, but mingled with corruption; whereof it is, that a Christian is said to be smoking flax. Whence we see, that *Grace doth not waste corruption all at once, but some is left to conflict withall.* The purest actions of the purest men need Christ to perfume them, and so is his office. When we pray, we need to pray again for Christ to pardon the defects of them. See some instances of this smoking flax. *Moses* at the red Sea being in

in a great perplexity, and know- Cap.
ing not what to ſay, or which way
to turne him, groaned to God:
no doubt this was a great conflict
in him. In great diſtreſſes *we*
know not what to pray, but the Spi- Rom. 8. 2
rit makes requeſt with ſighes that
cannot be expreſſed. Broken hearts
can yeeld but broken prayers.

When *David* was before the
King of *Gath*, and diſfigured 1 Sam. 21.
himſelf in an uncomely manner,
in that ſmoke there was ſome fire
alſo; you may ſee what an excel-
lent Pſalm he makes upon that
occaſion; Wherein, upon experi-
ence, he ſaith, *The Lord is neer* Pſ. 34. 18
unto them that are of a contrite Pſ. 31. 22
ſpirit: I ſaid in my haſte, I am caſt David.
out of thy ſight; there is *ſmoke*:
Yet thou heardeſt the voice of my
prayer; there is *fire*. *Maſter, careſt* Mat. 8. 25
thou not that we periſh? (cry the
Diſciples) here is ſmoke of infide-
lity, yet ſo much light of faith as
ſtir-

ap. 6. stirred them up to pray to *Christ*. *Lord I believe*; there is *light*: But
at. 9.24. *help my unbelief*; there is *smoke*.

Jonas cryes, *I am cast out of thy*
onas 2.4 *sight*; there is *smoke*: *yet will I look again to thy holy Temple*; there is *light*.

O miserable man that I am,
Ro. 7.24. (saith Saint *Paul* upon sense of his corruption;) but yet breaks out into *thankes to God through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

I sleep (saith the *Church* in the
Cant. 5.2. *Canticles*) *but my heart wakes*. In the seven Churches, which for their light are called *seven golden Candlestickes*, most of them had
ev. 2. & 3. much smoke with their light.

The ground of this mixture, is, that we carry about us a double principle, Grace and Nature. The end of it is especially to preserve us from those two dangerous Rocks which our natures are prone to dash upon, *Security* and

Pride,

Pride; and to force us to pitch our Cap, reſt on Juſtification, not Sanctification, which beſides imperfection, hath ſome ſoile.

Our ſpirituall fire is like our ordinary fire here below, that is, mixt; But fire is moſt pure in its own Element, above: So ſhall all our graces be, when we are where we would be, in Heaven, which is our proper Element.

Uſe. From this mixture it is, that the people of God have ſo different judgments of themſelves, looking ſometimes at the work of grace, ſometimes at the remainder of corruption, and when they look upon that, then they think they have no grace; though they love Chriſt in his ordinances, and children, yet dare not challeng ſo neer acquaintance as to be his. Even as a Candle in the Candleſtick ſometimes ſheweth [illegible] and ſometimes the ſhew of

Hence we judge ſo variouſly of our ſelves.

Cap. 7. of light is loſt: ſo ſometimes wel perſwaded they are of themſelves, ſometimes at a loſſe.

CHAP. VII.

Chriſt will not quench ſmall and weak beginnings.

Doct. Reaſ. 1. NOw for the ſecond Obſervation, *Chriſt will not quench the ſmoking Flax.* Firſt, becauſe this ſpark is from heaven, it is his own, it is kindled by his own ſpirit. 2. And ſecondly, it tendeth to the glory of his powerfull grace in his children, that he preſerveth light in the middeſt of darkneſſe, a ſparke in the middeſt of the ſwelling waters of corruption.

There is an eſpeciall bleſſing Esay 65. 8. in that little ſpark; *when wine is found in a cluſter, one ſaith, Deſtroy it not, for there is a bleſſing in it.* We ſee how our Saviour Chriſt bore with *Thomas* in his doubting:

ing: with the two *disciples* that went to *Emaus*, who staggered, *whether he came to redeem Israel or no*: he quenched not that little light in *Peter*, which was smothered: *Peter* denied him, but he denied not *Peter*; *If thou wilt thou canst*, said one poor man in the Gospel: *Lord if thou canst*, said another; both were this smoking flax, neither of both were quenched. If Christ had stood upon his own greatness, he would have rejected him that came with his [*if*] but Christ answers his [*if*] with a gracious & absolute grant, *I will, be thou clean*. The *woman* that was diseased with an issue, did but *touch*, and with a trembling hand, and but *the hem of his garment*, and yet went away both healed and comforted. In the *seven Churches* we see he acknowledgeth & cherisheth anything that was good in them. Because the Disciples slept

Cap. 7
Joh. 20. 2
Luc. 2. 21.
Mat. 26.
Mat. 8. 2.
Rev. 2. 8. 3.
Mat. 26. 41.

Cap. 7. slept of infirmity, being oppressed with grief, our Saviour Christ frameth a comfortable excuse for them, *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

If Christ should not be mercifull, he would misse of his own ends; *There is mercy with thee that thou mayst be feared.* Now all are willing to come under that banner of love which he spreadeth over his: *Therefore to thee shall all flesh come.* He useth moderation and care, *lest the spirits should fail before him, and the souls which he hath made.* Christs *heart yerned*, the Text saith, *when he saw them without meat, lest they should faint:* Much more will he have regard for the preventing of our spirituall faintings.

Psal. 65. 2.

Isay 57. 16

Use. Here see the opposite disposition between the holy nature of Christ, and the impure nature of Man. Man for a little smoke will quench

quench the light: Chriſt ever we ſee cheriſheth even the leaſt beginnings. How bare he with the many imperfections of his poore Diſciples? If he did ſharply check them, it was in love, and that they might ſhine the brighter. Can we have a better pattern to follow than this of him by whom we hope to be ſaved? *We that are ſtrong ought to bear with the infirmities of them that are weak. I become all things to all men, that I may win ſome.* O that this gaining and winning diſpoſition were more in many! Many (ſo far as in us lyeth) are loſt for want of incouragement. See how that faithfull fiſher of men, Saint *Paul*, labours to catch his Judge, *I know thou beleeveſt the Prophets*: and then wiſheth all ſaving good, but not bonds; he might have added them too, but he would not diſcourage one that made but an offer.

Cap. Weake Chriſtians muſt be heartned.

Rom. 15. 1 Cor. 9. 22.

Act. 26. 27.

p. 7. offer, he would therefore wish *Agrippa* only that wch was good in
r. 12. Religion. How careful was our B.
d 13. Saviour of *little ones* that they might not be *offended?* How doth he defend his Disciples from malicious imputations of the Pharisees? How carefull *not to put new*
at. 9. 15, *wine into old vessels*, not to alienate new beginners with the austerities of Religion (as some indiscreetly.) O (saith he) they shall have time to fast when I am gone, and strength to fast when the Holy Ghost is come upon them.

It is not the best way to fall foul presently with young beginners for some lesser vanities, but shew them a more excellent way, and breed them up in positive grounds, and other things will be quickly out of credit with them. It is not amisse to conceale their wants, & to excuse some failings, to commend their performances,

to

to cheriſh their towardneſſe, to remove all rubs out of their way, to help them every way to bear the yoke of Religion with greater eaſe, to bring them in love with God and his ſervice, leſt they diſtaſte it before they know it. For the moſt part we ſee Chriſt planteth in young beginners a love which we call *the firſt love*, to carry them through their profeſſion with more delight, and doth not expoſe them to croſſes, before they have gathered ſtrength; as we breed up young plants, and fence them from the weather, untill they be rooted. Mercy to others ſhould move us to deny our ſelves in our lawfull liberties oftentimes, in caſe of offence of weak ones; it is the *little ones that are offended.* The weakeſt are apteſt to think themſelves deſpiſed, there-

Cap. 7

Rev. 2. 4.

Mat. 18. 6

ap. 7. therefore we ſhould be moſt carefull to give them content.

It were a good ſtrife amongſt Chriſtians, one to labour to give no offence, and the other to labour to take none. The beſt men are ſevere to themſelves, tender over others.

Yet people ſhould not tire and wear out the patience of others: nor ſhould the weaker ſo far exact moderation frõ others, as to bear out themſelves upon their indulgence, and ſo to reſt in their own infirmities, with danger to their own ſouls, and ſcandall to the Church.

Neither hereupon muſt they ſet light by the gifts of God in others, which grace teacheth to honour whereſoever they are found, but know their parts and place, and not enterpriſe any thing above their meaſure, which may make both their perſons and their

their caſe obnoxious to ſcorne. Cap. 7.
When blindneſſe and boldneſſe, ignorance and arrogance, weakneſſe and wilfulneſſe meet together in one, it renders men odious to God, it maketh men burdenſome in ſociety, dangerous in their counſels, troublers of better deſignes, untractable and uncapable of better direction, miſerable in the iſſue: where Chriſt ſheweth his gracious power in weakneſſe, he doth it by letting men underſtand themſelves ſo far as to breed humility, and magnifying of Gods love to ſuch as they are: he doth it as a preſervative againſt diſcouragements from *weakneſſe*, ſeeing it bringeth men into a leſſe diſtance from grace (as being an advantage to poverty of ſpirit) then greatneſs of condition & parts, which yield to corrupt nature fewell for pride. Chriſt refuſeth none for weakneſſe

Cap. 7. weakneſſe of parts, that none ſhould be *diſcouraged*, accepteth of none for greatneſſe, that none ſhould be *lifted up* with that which is of ſo little reckoning with God. It is no great matter how dull the ſcholar be when Chriſt taketh upon him to be the Teacher: who as he preſcribeth what to underſtand, ſo he giveth underſtanding it ſelf even to the ſimpleſt.

The Church ſuffereth much from weak ones, therefore we may challenge liberty to deal with them, as *mildly*, ſo oftentimes *directly*. The ſcope of true love, is to make the party better, which by concealment oftentimes is hindered: with ſome a ſpirit of meekneſſe prevaileth moſt, but with ſome a rod. Some muſt be *pulled out of the fire* with
Jude 22. violence, and they will *bleſſe God for us in the day of their viſitation*.

We

We ſee our Saviour multiplies *woe* upon *woe*, when he was to deale with hard-hearted *Hypocrites*; for Hypocrites need ſtronger conviction than groſſe ſinners, becauſe their will is naught, and thereupon uſually their converſion is violent. An hard knot muſt have an anſwerable wedg, elſe in a cruell pity we betray their ſouls. A ſharp reproofe ſometimes is a precious pearle, and a *ſweet balme*. The wounds of ſecure ſinners will not be healed with ſweet words. The Holy Ghoſt came aſwell in *fiery tongues*, as in the likeneſſe of a *Dove*, and the ſame Holy Spirit will vouchſafe a ſpirit of prudence and diſcretion, (which is the ſalt to ſeaſon all our words and actions.) And ſuch wiſdome will teach us *to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon*, both to the weary, and likewiſe to the ſecure ſoul. And indeed Cap. 7. Mat. 23. Eſay 50. 4.

Cap. 7. he had need have *the tongue of the learned* that shall either raise up or cast down: But in this place I speak of mildnesse towards those that are weak, and are sensible of it; These we must bring on gently, and *drive softly*, as *Jacob* did his Cattel, according to their pace, and as his children were able to endure.

Gen. 33. 14.

Weak Christians are like glasses which are hurt with the least violent usage, otherwise if gently handled will continue a long time. *This honour* of gentle use we are to *give to the weaker vessels*, by which we shall both preserve them, and likewise make them usefull to the Church and our selves.

1 Pet. 3. 7.

In unclean bodies if all ill humours be purged out, you shall purge life and all away. Therefore though God saith, that *he will fine them as silver is fined*, Yet

Zac. 13. 9.

Esay

Esay 48.10. he said, *He hath fined them, but not as silver*, that is, so exactly as that no drosse remaineth, for he hath respect to our weaknesse. Perfect refining is for another world, for the world of the *soules of perfect men.* Cap. 8.

CHAP. VIII.

Tendernesse required in Ministers toward young beginners.

DIvines had need to take heed therefore how they deal with these in divers particulars: as first let them be carefull they strain not things too high, making those generall and necessary evidences of grace, which agree not to the experience of many a good Christian, and lay salvation and damnation upon those things that are not fit to bear so great a weight, whereupon men are

Use for Ministers 1.

Notes of true grace.

Cap. 8. groundlesly cast down lower by them, than they can hastily be raised up again by themselves or others. The Ambassadors of so gentle a Saviour should not be over-masterly, setting up themselves in the hearts of people, where Christ alone should sit as in his own Temple. Too much respect to man was one of the inlets of Popery; *Let a man account of us as of the Ministers of Christ*, neither more nor lesse, just so much. How carefull was S. *Paul* in cases of conscience not to lay a snare upon any weak conscience!

1 Cor. 4. 1.

2. Darke speeches.

They should take heed likewise that they hide not their meaning in *darke speeches*, speaing in the clouds. Truth seareth nothing so much as concealment, and desireth nothing so much as clearly to be laid open to the view of all: When it is most naked,

ked, it is moſt lovely & powerful. Cap. 8.

Our bleſſed Saviour as he took our nature upon him, ſo he took upon him our *familiar* manner of *ſpeech*, which was part of his voluntary abaſement. S. *Paul* was a profound man, yet became as a *nurſe* to the weaker ſort. 1 Theſ. 2. 7.

That ſpirit of mercy that was in Chriſt ſhould move his ſervants to be content to abaſe themſelves for the good of the meaneſt. What made the *Kingdome of heaven ſuffer violence* after *John the Baptiſts* time, but that comfortable truths were with that plainneſſe and evidence laid open, that the people were ſo affected with them, as they offered an holy *violence* to them? Mat. 11. 12.

Chriſt choſe thoſe to preach mercy, which had felt moſt mercy, as S. *Peter*, and S. *Paul*; that they might be examples of what they taught. S. *Paul became all* 1 Cor. 9. 2.

Cap. 8. *things to all men,* ſtooping unto them for their good: Chriſt came down from Heaven, and emptied himſelf of Majeſty in tender love to ſoules: ſhall we not come down from our high conceits, to do any poore ſoule good? ſhall Man be proud, after God hath been humble? We ſee the Miniſters of Satan turn themſelves into all
Mat. 23. 15 ſhapes to *make Proſelytes.* A Jeſuite will be every man. We ſee ambitious men ſtudy accommodation of themſelves to the humors of thoſe by whom they hope to be raiſed: and ſhall not we ſtudy application of our ſelves to Chriſt, by whom we hope to be advanced; nay, are already ſitting with him in heavenly places? After we are gained to Chriſt our ſelves, we ſhould labour to gain others to Chriſt. Holy Ambition and Covetouſneſſe will move us to put upon

our

our selves the disposition of Christ; but we must put off our selves first. Cap. 8.

We should not thirdly racke their wits with curious or *doubtfull disputes*; for so we shall distract and tire them, and give occasion to make them cast off the care of all. That age of the Church which was most fertile in *nice questions*, was most barren in *Religion*: For it makes people think Religion to be only a matter of wit, in tying and untying of knots; the brains of men given that wayes are hotter usually than their hearts. 3. Doubtfull disputes. Ro. 14 1.

Yet notwithstanding when we are cast into *times* and *places* wherein doubts are raised about main points, here people ought to labour to be established. God suffereth questions oftentimes to arise for triall of our love, and exercise of our parts. Nothing is A Caveat

Cap. 8. so certain as that which is certain after doubts. Shaking settles and rootes. In a contentious age, it is a witty thing to be a Christian, and to know what to pitch their souls upon: It is an office of love here to take away the stones, and to smooth the way to Heaven. Therefore we must take heed that under pretence of avoidance of disputes, we doe not suffer an adverse party to get ground upon the truth: For thus may we easily betray both the truth of God, and souls of men.

Nil tam certum quàm quod ex dubio certum.

4. Austerity. And likewise those are failing, that by overmuch austerity drive back troubled souls from having comfort by them: for by this carriage many smother their temptations, and burn inwardly, because they have none, into whose bosome they may vent their grief, and ease their souls.

We must neither *bind* where God

God looſeth, nor *looſe* where God bindeth; nor *open* where God ſhutteth, nor *ſhut* where God openeth; the right uſe of the Keyes is alwayes ſucceſſefull. In perſonall application there muſt be great heed taken: for a man may be a falſe Prophet, and yet ſpeak the truth, if it be not a truth to the perſon to whom he ſpeaketh; if he *grieve thoſe whom God hath not grieved*, by unſeaſonable truths; or by comforts in an ill way, the hearts of the wicked may be ſtrengthned. One mans meat may be anothers bane. Cap. 8.

If we look to the general temper of theſe times, rouzing and waking Scriptures are fitteſt: yet there be many broken ſpirits need ſoft and oily words. Even in the worſt time the Prophets mingled ſweet comfort for the *hidden remnant* of faithfull people. God

Cap. 8. hath *comfort, Comfort ye my people,* as well as *Lift up thy voice as a Trumpet.*

Isa. 40. 1, 2. 58, 1.

A Caveat. And here likewise there needs a Caveat. Mercy doth not rob us of our right judgement, as that we should take *stinking* firebrands for *smoking flax.* None will claim mercy more of others, than those whose portion is due severity. This example doth not countenance *lukewarmnesse*, nor too much indulgence to those that need quickning. Cold diseases must have hot remedies. It made for the just commendations of the Church of *Ephesus, That it could not bear with them which are evill.* We should so bear with others, as we discover withall a dislike of evil. Our Saviour Christ would not forbear sharp reproof, where he saw dangerous infirmities, in his most beloved Disciples. It bringeth under a curse

Rev. 2. 2.

to

to doe the work of the Lord negligently; even where it is a work of just severity: As when it is sheathing the sword in the bowels of the enemy. And those whom we suffer to be betrayed by their worst enemies, their sins, will have just cause to curse us another day. Cap. 8. Jer. 48. 10.

It is hard to preserve just bounds of mercy and severity, without a spirit above our own: which we ought to desire to be led withall, in all things. That *Wisdome which dwelleth with prudence* will guide us in these particulars, without which, vertue is not vertue, truth not truth: the rule and the case must be laid together: for if there be not a narrow insight, seeming likenesse in conditions will be the breeder of errours in our opinions of them. Those fiery, tempestuous, and destructive spirits in Popery, that seek Pro. 8. 12.

Cap. 8. ſeek to promote their Religion by cruelty, ſhew that they are ſtrangers to that wiſdome which is from above, which maketh men *gentle, peacable,* and ready to ſhew that *mercy* they have felt before themſelves. It is a way of prevailing, as agreeable to Chriſt, ſo likewiſe to mans nature, to prevaile by ſome forbearance and moderation.

And yet oft we ſee a falſe ſpirit in thoſe that call for *moderation,* it is but to carry their own project wth the greater ſtrength; and if they prove of the prevailing hand, they will hardly ſhew that moderation to others they now call for from others. And there is a proud kinde of moderation likewiſe, when men will take upon them to cenſure both parties, as if they were wiſer than *both,* although if the ſpirit be right, a looker on may ſee more than

than those that are in conflict. Cap. 9.

CHAP. IX.

Governours should be tender of weak ones, and also private Christians.

SO in the censures of the Church, it is more suitable to the Spirit of *Christ* to incline to the milder part, and not to kill a Flie on the forehead with a beetle, not shut men out of Heaven for a trifle. The very snuffers of the tabernacle were made of pure gold, to shew the purity of those censures, whereby the light of the Church is kept bright. That power that is given to the Church is given for edification, not destruction. How careful was S. *Paul* that the *incestuous Corinthian* repenting should not be swallowed up with too much grief? As for civil Magistrates, they for civil exigences & reasons of State, must let the

2 For the Church in censures. As *Parisien.*

2 Cor. 2. 7.

3 For civil Magistrates.

Cap. 9. the Law have its course: yet thus far they should imitate this mild King, as not to mingle *bitterness* and *passion* with authority derived from GOD. Authority is a beam of GODS Majesty, and prevaileth most where there is least mixture of that which is mans. It requireth more than ordinary wisdome to manage it aright. This string must not be too much strained up, nor too much let loose. Justice is an harmonicall thing. Herbes hot or cold beyond a certain degree, kill. We see even contrary Elements preserved in one body by a wise contemperation. Justice in rigour is oft extreme injustice, where some considerable circumstances should incline to moderation, and the reckoning will be easier for bending rather to moderation, than rigour.

Insolent carriage toward miserable

ſerable perſons, if *humbled*, is un- Cap. 9.
ſeemly in any who look for mercy themſelves. Miſery ſhould be a Loadſtone of *mercy*, not a footſtool for *pride* to trample on.

Sometimes it falleth out that thoſe that are under the government of others, are moſt injurious by way-wardneſſe and harſh cenſures, herein diſparaging and diſcouraging the endeavours of Superiours for publick good. In ſo great weakneſſe of mans nature, and eſpecially in this crazie age of the world, we ought to take in good part any moderate happineſſe we enjoy by government; and not be altogether as a nayl in the wound, exaſperating things by miſconſtruction. Here Love ſhould have a mantle to caſt upon leſſer errours of thoſe above us. Oftentimes the poor man is the oppreſſour by unjuſt clamors: we ſhould labour to give

the

Cap. 9. the best interpretation to the actions of Governours, that the nature of the actions will possibly beare.

For private Christians. In the last place, there is something for private Christians, even for all of us in our common relations, to take notice of: we are *debtors* to the weak in many thinges.

Evill examples. 1. Let us be watchfull in the use of our liberty, and labour to be inoffensive in our carriage, that our example *compell them not*. There is a commanding force in an example, as *Peter, Gal.* 2. Loosnesse of life is cruelty to our selves, and to the souls of others: though we cannot keep them from perishing, which will perish, in regard of the event; yet if we doe that which is apt of it self to destroy the souls of others, their ruine is imputable to us.

2. Let

2. Let men take heed of taking up Sathans office, in depraving the good actions of others, as he did *Jobs, doth he serve God for nought?* or slandering their persons, judging of them according to the wickedness that is in their own hearts. The devill getteth more by such discouragements, and these reproches that are cast upon Religion, than by fire and faggot. These (as unseasonable frosts) nip all gracious offers in the bud, and as much as in them lieth, with *Herod* labour to *kill* Christ in young professors. A Christian is an hallowed and a sacred thing, Christs *Temple; and he that destroyeth his Temple, him will Christ destroy.* Cap. 9. Slandering. 1 Cor. 3. 17.

3. Amongst the things that are to be taken heed of, there is amongst private Christians a bold usurpation of censure towards others, not considering Censuring and judging.

their

Cap. 9. their temptations. Some will unchurch and unbrother in a passion. But distempers do not alter true relations, though the child in a fit should disclaim the mother, yet the mother will not disclaim the child.

1 For the use of indifferent things.

There is therefore in these judging times good ground of S. *James* his Caveat, that there should not *be too many masters*; that we should not smite one another by hasty censures, especially in things of an indifferent nature: some things are as the mind of him is that doth them, or doth them not; for both may be unto the Lord.

Jam. 3. 1.

Anholy aim in things of a middle nature, makes the judgments of men, although seemingly contrary, yet not so much blameable. Christ, for the good aims he seeth in us, over-looketh any ill in them, so far as not to lay it to our charge.

Men

Men must not be too curious in prying into the weaknesses of others; we should labour rather to see what they have that is *for Eternity*, to incline our heart to love them, then into that weakness which the Spirit of God will *in time* consume, to estrange us: some think it strength of grace to endure nothing in the weaker, whereas the strongest are readiest to bear with the infirmities of the weak.

Cap. 9. 1. For weaknesses. *Nemo curiosus qui non malevolus.*

Where most holiness is, there is most moderation, where it may be without prejudice of piety to God and the good of others: we see in *Christ* a marvellous temper of absolute holiness, with great moderation, in this Text. What had become of our salvation, if he had stood upon terms, and not stooped thus low unto us? We need not affect to be more holy than *Christ*, it is

no

Cap. 9. no flatterie to do as he doth, so it be to edification.

The Holy Ghost is content to dwell in smokie offensive soules; Oh that that spirit would breathe into our spirits the like mercifull disposition! We endure the bitternesse of Wormwood, and other distastfull plants and herbs, onely because we have some experience of some wholsome qualitie in them; and why should we reject men of usefull parts and graces, onely for some harshnes of disposition, which, as it is offensive to us, so grieveth themselves?

Grace whilst we live *here* is in souls, which as they are unperfectly renewed, so they dwell in bodies subject to several humors, which will incline the soul sometimes to excess in one passion, sometimes to excess in another.

Bucer was a deep and a moderate

derate Divine; upon long expe- Cap. 9.
rience he reſolved to refuſe none in whom he ſaw (*aliquid Chriſti*) ſomething of Chriſt.

The beſt Chriſtians in this ſtate of imperfection are like Gold that is a little too light, which needs ſome grains of allowance to make it paſſe. You muſt grant the beſt their allowance. We muſt ſupply out of our love and mercy, that which we ſee wanting in them.

The Church of Chriſt is a common Hoſpitall, wherein all are in ſome meaſure ſick of ſome ſpiritual diſeaſe or other; that we ſhould all have ground of exerciſing mutually the ſpirit of wiſdom and meekneſſe.

How to attain a right ſpirit to deal with infirmities.

This that we may the better do, let us put upon our ſelves the Spirit of Chriſt. The Spirit of God carrieth a Majeſty with it. Corruption will hardly yield to cor-

Cap. 9. corruption in another. Pride is intolerable to pride. The *Weapons* of this Warfare must *not* be *carnall.* The great Apostles would not set upon the work of the Ministerie, until they were *clothed as it were with power from on high.* The Spirit will onely work with his own tooles. And we should think what affection *Christ* would carry to the party in this case. That great Physitian, as he had a quick eye, and a healing tongue, so had he a gentle hand and a tender heart.

1 Cor. 2. 4.

Luke 24. 49.

Aug. in 6. Gal. Nil sic spiritualem virum indicat, quàm alieni peccati tractatio.

And secondly, put upon us the condition of him whom we deal withall: we are, or have been, or may be such: make the case our own, and withall consider in what neere relation a Christian standeth unto us, even as a brother, a fellow-member, heir of the same salvation. And therefore let us take upon our selves a tender

care

care of them every way: and eſpecially in cheriſhing the peace of their conſciences. Conſcience is a tender and delicate thing, and ſo muſt be uſed. It is like a lock, if the wards be troubled, it will be troubleſome to open. Cap. 10.

Nil magis ad miſericordiam inclinat, quam proprii periculi cogitatio. Auguſt.

Chap. X.

Rules to try whether we be ſuch as Chriſt will not quench.

For tryall, to let us ſee whether we be this ſmoking Flax, which Chriſt will not quench. In this tryall remember theſe 1. *Rules.* 2. *Signs.* *Uſe* 2. For triall.

1. We muſt have two eyes, one to ſee imperfections in our ſelves and others; the other to ſee what is good. *I am black,* ſaith the Church, *but yet comely.* Thoſe ever want comfort that are much in quarrelling with them- Rules how to examine our ſelves. 1.

Cap. 10. themselves, and through their infirmities are prone to feed upon such bitter things, as will most nourish those distempers they are sick of. These delight to be looking on the dark side of the cloud onely.

2. 2. We must not judge of our selves alwayes according to present feeling: for in temptations we shall see nothing but smoke of distrustfull thoughts. Fire may be raked up in the ashes, though not seen; life in the winter is hid in the root.

3. 3. Take heed of false reasoning; as because our fire doth not blaze out, as others, therefore we have no fire at all; and by false conclusions come to sin against the Commandment in *bearing false witness* against our selves. The Prodigall would not say he was no son, but that he was not worthy to be *called a son.*

Luk. 15. 19.

We

We muſt neither truſt to falſe evidence, nor deny true; for ſo we ſhould diſhonour the work of Gods Spirit in us, and loſe the help of that evidence which would cheriſh our love to Chriſt, and arm us againſt Satans diſcouragements: Some are ſo faulty this way, as if they had been hired by Satan the *Accuſer of the Brethren*, to plead for him, in accuſing themſelves. Ca. 10. Rev. 12. 10.

4. Know (for a ground of this) that in the Covenant of Grace, God requires the truth of Grace, not any certain meaſure; and a ſpark of fire is fire as well as the whole Element. Therefore we muſt look to grace in the ſpark as well as in the flame. All have not the like *ſtrong*, yet the like *precious Faith*, whereby they lay hold, and put on the perfect righteouſneſſe of Chriſt. A weake hand may receive a 2 Pet. 1. 1.

Ca. 10. rich Jewel; a few grapes will shew that the Plant is a Vine, and not a Thorne. It is one thing to be wanting in Grace, and another thing to want grace altogether, God knoweth we have nothing of our selves, therefore in the Covenant of Grace he requireth no more then he giveth, and giveth what he requireth, and accepteth what he giveth;

Lev. 12. 6. *He that hath not a Lamb, may bring a pair of Turtle Doves.* What is the Gospel it self but a mercifull moderation, in which *Christs* obedience is esteemed ours, and our sins laid upon him; and wherein God of a Judge becommeth a Father pardoning our sins, and accepting our obedience though feeble and blemished? We are now brought to heaven under the Covenant of Grace, by a way of love and mercy.

It

It will prove a ſpeciall help, to know diſtinctly the difference between the *Covenant of works*, and the *Covenant of Grace*; between *Moſes* and *Chriſt*; *Moſes* without all mercy *breaketh all bruiſed Reedes*, and *quencheth all ſmoking Flax*. For the Law requireth, 1. perſonall, 2. perpetuall, 3. perfect obedience, 4. and from a perfect heart; and that under a moſt terrible curſe, and giveth no ſtrength, a ſevere Taske-maſter, like *Pharaohs*, requiring the whole tale, and yet giving no ſtraw. *Chriſt* cometh with bleſſing after bleſſing even upon thoſe whom *Moſes* had curſed, and with healing Balm for thoſe wounds which *Moſes* had made. Ca. 10. Goſpel and Law how they differ.

The ſame duties are required in both Covenants; as *to love the Lord with all our hearts, with all our ſoules, &c.* In the Covenant of Deut. 6. 5.

Ca. 10. *works*, this muſt be taken in the rigor: but under the Covenant of Grace, as it is a ſincere endeavour proportionable to grace received, and ſo it muſt be underſtood of *Joſias*, and others, when it is ſaid, *they loved God with all their hearts, &c.* It muſt have an Evangelicall mitigation.

The Law is ſweetned by the Goſpel, and becometh delightfull to *the inner man.* Under this gracious Covenant ſincerity is perfection. This is the *Death in the pot* in the Roman Religion, that they confound two Covenants: and it deads the comfort of drooping ones, that they cannot diſtinguiſh them. And thus they ſuffer themſelves to be *held under bondage*, when Chriſt hath ſet them free; & ſtay themſelves *in the priſon*, when Chriſt hath ſet open the doors before them.

Rom. 7. 22

Iſa. 61. 1, 2.

5. Grace

5. Grace ſometimes is ſo little as is undiſcernable to us: the Spirit ſometimes hath ſecret operations in us, which we know not for the preſent; but Chriſt knoweth. Sometimes in bitterneſſe of temptation, when the Spirit ſtruggles with ſenſe of Gods anger, we are apt to think God an enemy; and a troubled ſoul is like troubled water, we can ſee nothing in it; and ſo far as it is not cleanſed, it will caſt up mire and dirt. It is full of *objections* againſt it ſelf, yet for the moſt part we may diſcerne ſomething of this hidden life, and of theſe ſmothered ſparks. Ca. 10.

In a gloomy day there is ſo much light whereby we may know it to be day, and not night: ſo there is ſomething in a Chriſtian under a cloud, whereby he may be diſcerned to be a true Be-

Ca. 10. leever, and not an hypocrite. There is no meer darkneſſe in the ſtate of grace, but ſome beam of light, whereby the *Kingdom of darkneſſe* wholly prevaileth not.

CHAP. XI.

Signs of ſmoking flax which Chriſt will not quench.

THeſe things premiſed, let us know for a tryall,

2. Particular ſignes to know if we be ſmoking Flax.

1. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

Iſa. 8. 20.

Firſt, if there be any holy fire in us, it is kindled from heaven by the *Father of lights*, who *commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſſe*. As it is kindled in the uſe of meanes, ſo it is fed. The light in us, and the light in the Word ſpring one from the other, and both from the Holy Spirit: and therefore thoſe that regard not the word, it is becauſe there *is no light*

light in them. Heavenly Truths must have an Heavenly light to diſcern them. Naturall men ſee Heavenly things, but not in their own proper light, but by an inferiour light; God in every converted man putteth a light into the eye of his ſoul, proportionable to the light of truths revealed unto him. A carnall eye will never ſee ſpirituall things. Ca. 11.

Secondly, the leaſt divine light hath heat with it in ſome meaſure: Light in the underſtanding breedeth heat of love in the affections. In what meaſure the ſanctified underſtanding ſeeth a thing to be true, or good, in that meaſure the will imbraces it. Weak light breeds weak inclinations; a ſtrong light, ſtrong inclinations. A little ſpirituall light is of ſtrength enough to anſwer ſtrong objections of fleſh and blood, and to look thorough

Claritas in intellectu parit ardorem in affectu.

Ca. 11. all earthly allurements and oppoſing hinderances, preſenting them as far inferiour to thoſe heavenly objects it eyeth.

All light that is not ſpirituall, (becauſe it wanteth the ſtrength of ſanctifying grace,) yieldeth to every little temptation, eſpecially when it is fitted and ſuted to perſonall inclinations. This is the reaſon, why Chriſtians that have light little for quantity, but yet heavenly for quality, hold out, when men of larger apprehenſions ſink.

This prevailing of light in the ſoul, is, becauſe together with the ſpirit of Illumination, there goeth (in the godly) *a ſpirit of power*, to ſubdue the heart to truth revealed, and to put a taſte and reliſh into the will, ſuitable to the ſweetneſſe of the truths; elſe a meer naturall Will, will riſe againſt ſupernaturall truths, as.

2 Tim. 1. 7

as having an antipathy and enmi- Ca. 11.
ty againſt them. In the godly, holy truths are conveyed by way of a taſte, gracious men have a ſpirituall palate as well as a ſpirituall eye. Grace altereth the reliſh.

Thirdly, where this heavenly 3.
light is kindled, it directeth in the right way. For it is given for that uſe, to ſhew us the beſt way, and to guide in the particular paſſages of life: if otherwiſe, it is but common light, given only for the good of others. Some have light of knowledg, yet follow not that light, but are guided by carnall reaſon and policy: ſuch as the *Prophet* ſpeaks of; *All you* Iſa. 50. 11.
that kindle a fire, walk in the light of your own fire, and in the ſparks that you have kindled, but this you ſhall have of mine hand, ye ſhall lie down in ſorrow. God delights to confound carnall wiſdom, as en-

Ca. 11. mity to him, and robbing him of his prerogative, who is God only wise. We must therefore walk by his light, and not the blaze of our own fire. *God must light our candle, Psal.* 18. 28. or else we are like to *abide in darkness.* Those sparks that are not kindled from heaven, are not strong enough to keep us from lying down in sorrow, though they make a greater blaze and shew than the light from above, as mad men do greater things then sober, but by a false strength: so the excesse of these mens joy ariseth from a false light, *The candle of the wicked shall be put out.*

The light that some men have, it is like lightning, which after a sudden flash leaveth them more in darkness. They can love the light as it shines, but hate it as it discovers, and directs. A little holy light will inable to keep the

the word, and not betray Religi- Ca. 11.
on, and deny Chriſts name, as
Chriſt ſpeaketh of the Church of
Philadelphia. Rev. 3.8.

Fourthly, where this *fire* is, it 4.
will ſever things of divers na-
tures, and ſhew a difference be-
tween things, as gold and droſſe.
It will ſever between fleſh and
ſpirit, and ſhew that this is of *Na-*
ture, this of *Grace*. All is not ill in
a bad action, or good in a good
action. There is gold in oare,
which God and his Spirit in us
can diſtinguiſh. A carnall mans
heart is like a dungeon, wherein
is nothing to be ſeen but horrour
and confuſion: this light maketh
us judicious, and humble, upon
clearer ſight of Gods purity, and
our own uncleanneſs: and maketh
us able to diſcern of the work of
the Spirit in another.

Fifthly, ſo far as a man is ſpiri- 5.
tuall, ſo far is light delightfull
unto

Ca. 11. unto him, as willing to see any thing amisse, that he may reform, and any further service discovered that he may perform, because he truly hateth ill and loveth good: if he goeth against light discovered, he will soon be reclaimed, because light hath a friendly party within him. Whereupon, at a little sight of his errour, he is soon counselable, as *David* in his intendment to kill *Nabal*, and *blesseth God* afterwards when he is stopped in an ill way.

1 Sam. 25. 32.

In a carnall man the light breaks in upon him, but he labours to shut the passages, he hath no delight to come to the light. It is impossible before the spirit of Grace hath subdued the heart, but that it should sin against the light, either by resisting of it, or keeping it prisoner under base lusts, and burying it as it were in the earth; or perverting

ing of it, and ſo making it an a- Ca. 11.
gent and factor for the fleſh, in ſearching out arguments to plead for it, or abuſing that little meaſure of light they have, to keep out a greater, higher, and more heavenly light, and ſo at length make that light they have a miſleading guide to utter darkneſſe. And the reaſon is, becauſe it hath no friend within, the ſoul is in a contrary frame, and light alwaies hindreth that ſinfull peace that men are willing to ſpeak to thẽſelves: whence we ſee it oft inrages men the more, as the Sun in the Spring breedeth aguiſh diſtempers, becauſe it ſtirreth humours, and doth not waſte them. There is nothing in the world more unquiet, than the heart of a wicked man, that ſitteth under means of knowledg, untill like a thief he hath put out the candle that he may ſin with the

Ch.1.11. the leſſe check. Spirituall light is diſtinct, it ſeeth ſpirituall good, with application to our ſelves; but common light is confuſed, and lets ſin lye quiet. Where fire is in any degree, it will fight againſt the contrary matter: God hath put irreconcileable hatred between *light* and *darkneſs* at firſt, ſo between good and ill, *fleſh and ſpirit*. Grace will never joyn with ſin, no more than fire with water. Fire wil mingle with no contrary, but preſerveth its own purity, & is never corrupted as other Elements are. Therefore thoſe that plead and plot for liberties of the fleſh, ſhew themſelves ſtrangers from the life of God. Upon this ſtrife gracious men oft complain that they have no grace, but they contradict themſelves in their complaints, as if a man that ſeeth, ſhould complain he cannot ſee, or complain that he is aſleep, when

Gal.5.17.

when the very complaint ſpring- Ca. 11.
ing from a diſpleaſure againſt ſin, ſheweth that there is ſomething in him oppoſite to ſin. Can a dead man complain? Some things, though bad in themſelves yet diſcover good; as ſmoke diſcovers ſome fire. Breaking out in the body ſhews ſtrength of Nature. Some infirmities diſcover more good than ſome ſeeming beautiful actions; exceſſe of paſſion in oppoſing evil, (though not to be juſtified) yet ſheweth a better ſpirit than a calm temper, where there is juſt cauſe of being moved. Better it is, that the water ſhould run ſomething muddily, than not at all. *Job* had more grace in his diſtempers, than his friends in their ſeeming wiſe carriage. Actions ſoiled with ſome weakneſſes, are more accepted than complemental all performances.

Fire,

Ca. 11. 7. Fire, where it is in the least measure, is in some degree active; so the least measure of grace is working, as springing from the spirit of God, which from the working nature of it, is compared to fire. Nay, in sins, when there seemeth nothing active, but corruption, yet there is a contrary principle, which breaks the force of Sin, so that it is not *out of measure sinfull*, as in those that are carnal.

Rom. 7. 13.

8. Fire maketh metals pliable and malliable, so doth Grace, where it is begun, it worketh the heart to be pliable and ready for all good impressions. Untractable spirits shew that they are not so much as smoking Flax.

9. Fire turneth all, as much as it can, to fire; so grace laboureth to breed the like Impression in others, and make as many good as it can: grace likewise maketh

a

a gracious uſe even of naturall and civil things, and doth ſpiritualize them: what another man doth onely civilly, a gracious man will do holily. Whether he eateth or drinketh, or whatſoever he doth, he doth all to the glory of God, making every thing ſerviceable to the laſt end. Cap. 9.

Sparks by nature flie upwards: ſo the ſpirit of Grace carrieth the ſoul Heaven-ward, and ſetteth before us holy and heavenly aimes: as it was kindled from heaven, ſo it carries us back to heaven. The part followeth the whole: Fire mounteth upward, ſo every ſpark to its own element. Where the aime and bent of the ſoul is God-wards, there is grace, though oppoſed. The leaſt meaſure of it is holy deſires ſpringing from Faith and Love, for we cannot deſire any thing which we do not believe firſt to be, 10.

Ca. 11. be, and the desire of it issues from love. Hence desires are counted a part of the thing desired in some measure, but then they must be, First, Constant; for constancy shewes that they are supernaturally natural, and not inforced: Secondly, they must be carried to spiritual things, as to believe, to love God, &c. not out of a special exigent, because if now they had grace, they think they might escape some danger, but as a loving heart is carried to the thing loved for some excellency in it self: And thirdly, with desire there is grief when it is hindered, which stirs up to prayer: *Oh that my waies were so directed, that I might keep thy Statues! O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver? &c.* Fourthly, desires put us onward still, O that I might serve God with more liberty; O that

Desires how ordered.

2.

3.

Ps. 119. 5.

Ro. 7. 24.

that I were more free from theſe offenſive, unſavory noyſome luſts. Cap. 9.

Fire worketh it ſelf (if it hath any matter to feed on) into a larger compaſſe, and mounteth higher and higher, and the higher it riſeth, the purer is the flame: So where true Grace is, it *groweth* in meaſure and purity. Smoking Flax will grow to a flame; and as it increaſeth, ſo it worketh out the contrary, and refineth it ſelf more and more. Therefore it argueth a falſe heart to ſet our ſelves a meaſure in grace, and to *reſt* in beginnings; alledging, that *Chriſt* will not quench the Smoking Flax. But this mercifull diſpoſition in *Chriſt* is joyned with perfect holineſſe, ſhewed in perfect hatred to ſin: for rather than ſin ſhould not have its deſerved puniſhmẽt, himſelf became a ſacriſice for ſin.

Ignis quò magis lucet eò minùs fumat.

Ca. 11. sin, wherein his Fathers holiness and his own most of all shined. And besides this, in the work of sanctification, though he favours his work in us, yet favours he not sin in us; for he will never take his hand from his work, untill he hath taken away sin even in its very being from our natures: the same Spirit that purified that blessed masse whereof he was made, clenseth us by degrees to to be suitable to so holy an Head, and frameth the judgement and affection of all to whom he sheweth mercy, to concur with his own, in labouring to further his ends, in abolishing of sin out of our nature.

CHAP.

Ca. 12.

CHAP. XII.

Scruples hindering comfort, removed.

FRom the meditation of theſe rules and ſigns, much comfort may be brought into the ſoules of the weakeſt; which that it may be in the more aboudance, let me adde ſomething for the helping them over ſome few ordinary objections, and ſecret thoughts againſt themſelves, which getting within the heart oftentimes keep them under. *Uſe.*

Some thinke they have no faith at all, becauſe they have no full aſſurance; when as the faireſt fire that can be will have ſome ſmoke. The beſt actions will ſmell of the ſmoke. The mortar wherein Garlick hath been ſtamped, will alwaies ſmell of it: So all our actions will ſavour ſomething 1.

Ca. 12. thing of the old man.

2. In weakneſs of body ſome think grace dyeth, becauſe their performances are feeble, their ſpirits being the inſtruments of their ſoules actions, being waſted; not conſidering that GOD regards thoſe hidden ſighes of thoſe that want abilities to expreſſe them outwardly; he that pronounceth them bleſſed that conſider the the poor, will have a mercifull conſideration of ſuch himſelf.

3. Some again are haunted with hideous repreſentations to their fantaſies, and with vile and unworthy thoughts of God, of Chriſt, of the word, &c. which as buſy flies diſquiet and moleſt their peace; theſe are caſt in like wild-fire by Satan, as may be diſcerned by the 1. ſtrangneſſe, 2. ſtrength and violence, 3. horribleneſſe of them even unto nature corrupt. A pious ſoul is

Vellem ſervari, Domine, ſed cogitationes non patiuntur.

no

no more guilty of them, than *Benjamin* of *Joſephs cup* put into his ſack. Amongſt other helps preſcribed by godly Writers (as abomination of them, and diverſion from them to other things, &c.) let this be one, to complain unto Chriſt againſt them, and to fly under the wings of his protection, and to deſire him to take our part againſt his and our enemie. Shall every ſin and blaſphemie of man be forgiven, and not theſe blaſphemous thoughts, which have the Devill for their father? When Chriſt himſelf was therefore moleſted in this kind, that he might ſuccour all poor ſouls in the like caſe. Ca. 12.

But there is a difference betwixt Chriſt and us in this caſe, by reaſon that Satan had nothing of his own in Chriſt, his ſuggeſtions left no impreſſion at all in his holy nature, but (as ſparks falling into

Why Satan doth ſooner prevaile over us, than he could over Chriſt.

Ca. 12. into the Sea) were presently quenched. Satans temptations of Christ were onely suggestions on Satans part, and apprehensions of the vileness of them on Christs part; to apprehend ill suggested by another, is not ill; it was Christs grievance, but Satans sin; but thus he yielded himself to be tempted, that he might both pity us in our conflicts, and train us up to manage our spirituall weapons as he did. Christ could have overcome him by power, but he did it by argument: But when Satan commeth to us, he findeth something of his own in us, which holdeth correspondency and hath intelligence with him; there is the same enmity in *our nature* to God and goodness in some degree, that is in Satan himself; whereupon his temptations fasten for the most part some taint upon us. And if there wanted

wanted a Devill to ſuggeſt, yet ſinfull thoughts would ariſe from *within us*; though none were caſt in from without, we have a mint of them within: Theſe thoughts if the ſoul dwell on them ſo long as to ſuck or draw from and by them any ſinfull delight, then they leave a more heavy guilt upon the ſoul, and hinder our ſweet communion with God, and interrupt our peace, and put a contrary reliſh into the ſoul, diſpoſing of it to greater ſins. All ſcandalous breakings out are but thoughts at the firſt. Ill thoughts are as little theeves, which creeping in at the window open the door to greater; thoughts are ſeeds of actions. Theſe, eſpecially when they are helped forward by Sathan, make the life of many good Chriſtians almoſt a Martyrdome. In this caſe it is an unſound comfort that ſome mi- Ca. 12.

Moroſa cogitatio.

Ca. 12. niſter, that ill thoughts ariſe from nature, and what is naturall is excuſable; but we muſt know, that nature as it came out of Gods hands at the firſt, had no ſuch riſings out of it: the ſoul as inſpired of God, had no ſuch unſavory breathings; but ſince that by ſin it betraied it ſelf, it is in ſome ſort naturall to it to forge ſinful imaginations, and to be a furnace of ſuch ſparks; and this is an aggravation of the ſinfulneſſe of naturall corruption, that it is ſo deeply rooted, and ſo generally ſpread in our nature.

Evil thoughts their originall, & how expelled.

It furthereth humiliation, to know the whole breadth and depth of ſin; onely this, that our nature now ſo far as it is unrenewed, is ſo unhappily fruitfull in ill thoughts, miniſters this comfort, that it is not our caſe alone, as if our condition herein were ſevered from others, (as ſome have

have been tempted to thinke, Ca. 12.
even almost to despair; None
say they, have such a lothsome
nature as I have) this springs
from *ignorance* of the spreading
of originall sin, for what can come
from an unclean thing, but that
which is unclean? *as in the water* Prov. 27.
face answers face, so the polluted 19.
heart of one man answereth to the
heart of another, where grace hath
not made some difference. As
in annoyances from Sathan, so
here, the best way is to lay open
our complaints to Christ, and
cry with S. *Paul*, *O miserable* *Dom'ne,*
man that I am, who shall deliver *vim patior.*
me from this body of death! upon Rom. 7.
this venting of his distressed soul, 4, 25.
he presently found comfort, for
he breaketh into thankesgiving;
thankes be to God, &c. And it is
good to take advantage from
hence to hate this noisome body
of death the more, and to draw

Ja. 12. neerer unto God, as that holy
Ps. 73. 22. and 28. man after his *fooliſh and beaſtly thoughts* did, and to keep our hearts cloſer to' God, ſeaſoning them with heavenly meditations in the morning, ſtoring up good matter that our heart may be a good treaſury, and begging of Chriſt his holy Spirit to ſtop that curſed iſſue, and to be a living Spring of better thoughts in us. Nothing more abaſeth the Spirits of holy men that deſire to delight in God after they have eſcaped the common defilements of the world, than theſe unclean iſſues of Spirit, as being moſt contrary to God, who is a *pure Spirit*: but the very irkſomeneſs of thē yields matter of comfort againſt them; they force the ſoul to all ſpirituall exerciſes, to *watchfulneſſe*, and a more neer *walking with* God, and to raiſe it ſelf to thoughts of an higher nature, which

which the truth of God, workes Ca. 1.
of God, Communion of Saints, the myſtery of godlineſſe, the conſideration of the terrour of the Lord, of the excellency of the ſtate of a Chriſtian, and converſation ſuitable, do abundantly miniſter. They diſcover to us a neceſſity of daily purging and pardoning grace, and of ſeeking to be found in Chriſt, and ſo bring the beſt often upon their knees.

But our chief comfort is, that Mat. 4. 10.
our bleſſed *Saviour* as he bad Satan *avant* from himſelf after he had given way a while to his impudency; ſo he will command him to be gone from us, when it ſhall be good for us; he muſt *be gone* at a word. And he can and will likewiſe in his due time rebuke the rebellious and extravagant ſtirrings of our hearts, and bring all the thoughts

Ca. 12. of the inner man in subjection to himself.

4. Some think when they begin once to be troubled with the smoke of corruption more than they were before, therefore they are worse than they were. It is true, that corruptions appear now more than before, but they are lesse.

1. For first, sin the more it is seen the more it is hated, and thereupon is the lesse. Moats are in a roome before the Sun shines, but they then onely appear.

2. Secondly, Contraries the neerer they are one to another, the sharper is the conflict betwixt them: now of all enemies the Spirit and the flesh are neerest one to another, being both in the soul of a regenerate man, and in faculties of the soul, and in every action that springeth from those faculties, and therefore it is

is no marvell the soul (the seat of this battel) thus divided in it self, be as smoking Flax. Ca. 1

Thirdly, the more grace, the more spirituall life, and the more spirituall life, the more antipathy to the contrary; whence none are so sensible of corruption, as those that have the most living souls. 3.

And fourthly, when men give themselves to carnal liberties, their corruptions trouble them not, as not being bounded and tied up; But when once grace suppresseth their extravagant and licentious excesses, then the flesh boyleth, (as disdaining to be confined) yet they are better now than they were before. That matter which yields smoke, was in the Torch before it was lighted, but it is not offensive till the Torch begins to burn. Let such know, that if the smoke be once 4.

Ca. 12. offensive to them, it is a sign that there is light. It is better to enjoy the benefit of light, though with smoke, than to be altogether in the darke.

Neither is smoke so offensive, as light is comfortable to us, it yielding an evidence of truth of grace in the heart; therefore though it be comberſome in the conflict, yet it is comfortable in the evidence. It is better, corruption should offend us now, than by giving way to it to redeeme a little peace with losse of comfort afterwards. Let such therefore as are at variance and oddes with their corruptions, look upon this Text, as their portion of comfort.

CHAP.

Ca. 13

CHAP. XIII.

Set upon duties, notwithſtanding weakneſſes.

HEre is an uſe of encouragement to duty, That Chriſt will not quench the ſmoking flax, but blow it up. Some are loth to perform good duties, becauſe they feel their hearts rebelling, and duties come off untowardly. We ſhould not avoid good actions for the infirmities cleaving unto them: Chriſt looketh more at the good in them that he meaneth to cheriſh, than the ill in them that he meaneth to aboliſh. A ſick man though in eating he ſomething increaſeth the diſeaſe, yet he will eate, that nature may get ſtrength againſt the diſeaſe: So though ſin cleaveth to what we do, yet let us do it, ſince we have to deal with ſo

Encouragement.

Ca. 13. good a Lord, and the more ſtrife we meet withall, the more acceptance: Chriſt loveth to taſte of the good fruits that come from us, although they will alwaies reliſh of the old ſtock.

A Chriſtian complaineth he cannot pray; O I am troubled with ſo many diſtracting thoughts and never more than now. But hath he put into thine heart a deſire to pray? he will heare the
Ro. 8. 26. deſires of his own Spirit in thee. *We know not what to pray for as we ought*, (nor do any thing elſe as we ought) *but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, with unexpreſſible ſighes and groans* which are not hid from God. *My groanings are*
Pſ. 38. 9. *not hid from thee*; God can pick ſenſe out of a confuſed prayer. Theſe deſires cry louder in his eares, than thy ſins. Sometimes a Chriſtian hath ſuch confuſed thoughts, he can ſay nothing, but

as

as a childe cryeth, O Father, not able to shew what it needs, as *Moses* at the Red Sea. Gal. 4. 6.

These stirrings of Spirit touch the bowels of God, and melt him into compassion towards us, when they come from the spirit of adoption, and from a striving to be better. III. 8

Oh, but is it possible, (thinketh the misgiving heart) that so holy a God should accept such a prayer? Obj.

Yes, he will accept that which is his own, and pardon that which is ours. *Jonas prayed in the Whales belly*, being burdened with the guilt of sin, yet God heareth him: Let not therefore infirmities discourage us. Saint *James* takes away this objection. Ans. Jonah 2. 1.

Some might object, If I were as holy as *Elias*, then my prayers might be regarded: But (saith he) *Elias was a man of like passions* James 5. 17.

Heb.4.15. ons to us, he had his passions as well as we; For do we think that God heard him because he was without fault? No surely. But Psal.50.15. look we to the promises; *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I* Mat.7.7. *will hear thee. Aske, and ye shall receive*, and such like: God accepteth our prayers though weak, 1. because we are his own children, they come from his own Spirit, 2. because they are according to his own will, 3. because they are offered in Christs mediation, and he takes them, and Rev.8.3. *mingleth them with* his own *odours*. There is never an holy sigh, never a tear we shed, lost. And as every grace increaseth by exercise of it self, so doth the grace of prayer; by prayer we learn to pray. So likewise we should take heed of a spirit of discouragement in all other holy duties, since we have so gracious a Saviour.

Why God accepeth of weake prayers.

Saviour. Pray as we are able, Ca. 1
hear as we are able, ſtrive as we are able, do as we are able, according to the meaſure of grace received; God in Chriſt will caſt a gracious eye upon that which is his own. Would S. *Paul* do nothing, becauſe *he could not do the good he would*? Yes, *he preſſed to the mark*. Let us not be cruel to our ſelves when Chriſt is thus gracious. Phil. 3. 1

The effect of Chriſtian meekneſſe contentation.

There is a certain meekneſſe of Spirit, whereby we yield thanks to God for any ability at all, and reſt quiet with the meaſure of grace received, ſeeing it is Gods good pleaſure it ſhould be ſo, who giveth the *will and the deed*; yet ſo as we reſt not from further endevours. But, when upon faithfull endeavour we come ſhort of that we would be, & ſhort of that others are, then know for our comfort, Chriſt will not quench

13. quench the ſmoking flax; and that ſincerity and truth (as before was ſaid) with endevour of growth, is our perfection. It is comfortable what God ſaith, 1 *King.* 14. 13. *He only ſhall come to his grave in peace, becauſe there is ſome goodneſſe*; though but ſome
Mark 9. 24 goodneſſe: *Lord, I believe*, with a weak faith, yet with faith; love thee with a faint love, yet with love; endevour in a feeble manner, yet endevour; a little fire is fire, though it ſmoketh. Since thou haſt taken me into thy Covenant to be thine of an enemy, wilt thou caſt me off for theſe infirmities, which as they diſpleaſe thee, ſo are they the grief of my own heart?

CHAP.

Ca. 14

Chap. XIV.

The Caſe of Indiſpoſition reſolved, and diſcouragements.

From what hath been ſpoken, (with ſome little addition) it will not be difficult to reſolve that caſe which ſome require help in, namely whether we ought to perform duties, our hearts being altogether indiſpoſed. For ſatisfaction, we muſt know, 1. our hearts of themſelves do linger after liberty, and are hardly brought under the yoke of duty: and the more ſpirituall the duty is, the more is their untowardneſſe. Corruption getteth ground; for the moſt part, in every neglect, it is as in rowing againſt the tide, one ſtrok neglected will not be gained in three, and therefore it is good to keep our hearts cloſe to duty

A caſe about indiſpoſition to duty.

I.

Ca. 13. duty, and not to hearken unto the excuſes they are ready to frame.

2. In the ſetting upon duty, God ſtrengtheneth his own party that he hath in us: we find a warmneſs of heart, and increaſe of ſtrength, the Spirit going along with us, and raiſing us up by degrees, untill it leaveth us as it were in heaven. God often delighteth to take the advantage of our indiſpoſition, that he may manifeſt his work the more clearly: and that all the glory of the work may be his, whoſe all the ſtrength is.

3. Obedience is moſt direct, when there is nothing elſe to ſweeten the action, although the *ſacrifice* be imperfect, yet the *obedience*, with which it is offered, hath acceptance.

4. That which is wonne as a ſpoil from our corruptions, will

will have ſuch a degree of comfort afterwards, as for the preſent it hath of comber. Feeling and freeneſſe of ſpirit is oft reſerved untill duty be diſcharged: reward followeth work. In and after duty, we find that experience of Gods preſence, which without obedience we may long wait for, and yet go without. This hindereth not the Spirits freedome in *blowing* upon our ſouls *when it liſteth*. For we ſpeak onely of ſuch a ſtate of ſoul, as is becalmed, and muſt row (as it were) againſt the ſtream. As in ſailing, the hand muſt be to the ſterne, and the eye to the ſtarre: ſo here, put forth that little ſtrength we have to duty, and look up for aſſiſtance, which the Spirit as freely, ſo ſeaſonably will afford. Ca. 14. John. 3. 8.

Caution.

Yet in theſe duties that require as well the body as the ſoul,

Ca. 14. soul, there may be a cessation till strength be repaired: whetting doth not let but fit. 2. In sudden passions there should be a time to compose and calm the soul, and to put the strings in tune; The Prophet would have a Minstrill to bring his soul into frame.

Discouragement from impatience in suffering.

So likewise we are subject to discouragements in suffering, by reason of impatiency in us: Alas, I shall never get through such a crosse. But if God bring us into the crosse he will be with us in the crosse, and at length bring us out *more refined*; we shall lose nothing but *drosse*. Of our own strength we cannot beare the least trouble, and by the Spirits assistance we can bear the greatest, the Spirit will joyn his shoulders to help us to bear our infirmities. *The Lord will put his hand to heave us up. You have heard of the patience of Job*, (saith *James*)

Zach. 13. 9.

C37.24.

Jam. 5. 11.

we

we have heard likewise of his impaciency too: But it pleased God mercifully to overlook that. It yields us comfort also in desolate conditions, as contagious sicknesses, and the like, wherein we are more immediately under Gods hand. Then Christ hath a throne of mercy at our beds side, and numbers our teares and our groanes. And to come to the matter we are now about: The *Sacrament* it was ordained not for Angels, but for Men, and not for perfect men, but for weak men, and not for Christ, who is truth it self, to binde him; but because we are ready by reason of our guilty and unbelieving hearts to call truth it self into question: Therefore it was not enough for his goodnesse to leave us *many previous promises*, but he giveth us seales to strengthen us: and what though we are not so pre- Ca. 14

This was preached at the Sacrament.

Ca. 14 prepared as we ſhould, yet let us
2 Chr. 30. 19. pray as *Hezekias* did, *The Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to ſeek the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleanſed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.* Then we come comfortably to this holy Sacrament, and with much fruit. This ſhould carry us through all duties with much cheerfulneſſe, That if we hate our corruptions, and ſtrive againſt them, they ſhall not be counted ours. *It is not I* (ſaith S. Paul) *but ſin that dwelleth in me;* for what diſpleaſeth us, ſhall never hurt us, and we ſhall be eſteemed of God to be that we love, and deſire, and labour to be; What we deſire to be, we ſhal be, and what we deſire truly to conquer, we ſhall conquer; for *God will fulfill the deſire of them that fear him;* the deſire is as earneſt of the thing deſired. How little encourage-

Ro. 7. 17. *Quod non vult non nocet.* When ſin is our ſorrow, it ſhall not be our ruine.

Pſ. 145. 19

courage ment will carry us to the affaires of this life? and yet all the helps God offers will hardly prevaile with our backward natures. Whence are then diſcouragements? 1. Not from the *Father*, for he hath bound himſelf in covenant *to pity us as a father pitieth his children*, and to accept as a father our weake endeavours, and what is wanting in the ſtrength of duty, he giveth us leave to take up in his gracious indulgence, whereby we ſhall honour that grace wherein he delights, as much as in more perfect performances. Ga. 14. Diſcouragements whence. Pſ. 103. 13 *Poſſibilitas tua menſura tua.*

2. Not from Chriſt, for he by office will not quench the ſmoking Flax. We ſee how Chriſt beſtoweth the beſt fruits of his love upon perſons, for condition mean, for parts weake, for infirmities, nay for groſſer falls, offenſive; firſt, thus it pleaſeth

2. 14. pleaseth him to confound the pride of flesh, which usually taketh measure of Gods love by some outward excellency. Secondly, thus he is delighted to shew the freedome of his grace and his prerogative Royall, that *whosoever glorieth, may glory in the Lord.*

In the eleaventh to the *Hebrewes*, among that cloud of witnesses we see *Rahab*, *Gedeon*, and *Sampson*, ranked with *Abraham* the father of the faithfull. Our blessed Saviour as he was the image of his Father, so in this he
leb. 11. 1, 32. was of the same mind, glorifying his Father for *revealing* the mystery of the Gospel to *simple men*, neglecting those that carried the chief reputation of *wisedom* in the *world*.

ug. de eccatorum eritis & iss. l. c. 14. It is not unworthy of the remembring that which S. *Augustine* speaketh of a silly man in his time,

time, deſtitute almoſt altogether of the uſe of reaſon, who when he was moſt patient of all injuries done to himſelf; yet, from a reverence of religion he would not endure any injury done to the Name of Chriſt; in ſo much that he would caſt ſtones at thoſe that blaſphemed, and would not in that caſe ſpare his own governours; which ſheweth that the parts of none are ſo low, as that they are beneath the gracious regard of Chriſt; where it pleaſeth him to make his choice, and to exalt his mercy, he paſſeth by no degree of wit, though never ſo plain. Ca. 14.

3. Neither do diſcouragements come from the *Spirit, he helps our infirmities*, and by office is a *Comforter*. If he convinceth of ſin, and ſo humbleth us, it is that he may make way to ſhew his office of *comforting*. Ro 8.26.

Diſ-

Ca. 15. Discouragements then must come from our selves and Satan, who laboureth to fasten on us a lothing of duty?

Chap. XV.

Of infirmities. No cause of discouragement. In whom they are. And how to recover peace lost.

Discouragement from scruples.

AND among other causes of discouragement, some are much vexed with scruples, (even against the best duties) partly by distemper of body, helped by Satans malice casting dust in their eyes, in their way to heaven; and partly from some remainder of ignorance, which like darkness breedeth feares: and as ignorance of other things, so especially of this mercifull disposition in Christ; the perswasion of which would easily banish false feares: they

they conceive of him as one ſitting at a catch for all advantages againſt them; wherein they may ſee how they wrong not onely themſelves but his goodneſſe. This ſcrupuloſity for the moſt part is a ſign of a godly ſoul, as ſome weeds are of a good ſoile: therefore are they the more to be pitied, for it is an heavy affliction, and the ground of it in moſt, is not ſo much from trouble of conſcience, as from ſickneſſe of fantaſie: the end of Chriſts coming was to free us from all ſuch groundleſſe feares. Ca. 15.

Diſcouragement from ignorance of our condition in Chriſt.

2. There is ſtill in ſome ſuch ignorance of that comfortable condition we are in under the Covenant of Grace; as by it they are much diſcouraged. Therefore we muſt know, 1. that weakneſſes do not break covenant with God: they do not

Ca. 15. between husband and wife; and shall we make our selves more pitifull than Christ, who maketh himself a pattern of love to all other husbands?

2. Weakenesses do not debar us from mercy, nay they incline God the more. Mercy is a part of the Churches jointure, *Christ marries her in mercy.* The husband is bound to bear with the wife, as *being the weaker vessel*, and shall we think he will exempt himself from his own rule, and not bear with his weak Spouse?

Ps. 78. 39. Hos. 2. 19.

3. If Christ should not be mercifull to our infirmities, he should not have a people to serve him.

Put case therefore we be very weak, yet so long as we are not found amongst malicious opposers, and underminers of Gods truth, let us not give way to despairing thoughts, we have a mercifull Saviour. But lest we flatter

flatter our ſelves without ground, Ca. 15.
we muſt know that weakneſſes Weakneſſes what.
are accounted either, 1. imperfections cleaving to our beſt actions, 1.
or, 2. ſuch actions, as proceed from want of age in Chriſt, 2.
whileſt we are Babes, or 3. from want of ſtrength, where there hath been little meanes, 3.
or 4. they are ſudden indeliberate breakings out, contrary to our generall bent and purpoſe, whileſt our judgement is overcaſt with the cloud of a ſudden temptation. 4.
After which, 1. we are ſenſible of our infirmity, 2. we grieve for it, 3. and from grief, complaine, and 4. with complaining ſtrive and labour to reforme, and in labouring get ſome ground of our corruption.

Weakneſſes ſo conſidered, howſoever they be matter of humiliation, and the object of our daily mortification; yet may

Ca. 15. ſtand with boldneſſe with God, neither is a good work either extinguiſhed by them, or tainted ſo far as to loſe all acceptance with God. But to plead for an infirmity is more than an infirmity; to allow our ſelves in weakneſſes is more than a weakneſſe. The juſtification of evil ſealeth up the lips, ſo that the ſoul cannot call God *Father* with that child-like liberty, or enjoy ſweet communion with him, until peace be made by ſhaming our ſelves, and renewing our faith. Thoſe that have ever been bruiſed for ſin, if they fall they are ſoon recovered. *Peter* was recovered with a gracious look of *Chriſt*; *David* by *Abigails* words. Tell a theefe or a vagrant that he is out of the way, he regards it not, becauſe his aime is not to walk in any certain way, but as it ſerveth his own turn.

For

For the further clearing of this, we muſt conceive, 1. that whereſoever ſins of infirmity are, there in that perſon muſt be the life of grace begun. There can be no weakneſſe, where there is no life. 2. There muſt be a ſincere and generall bent to the beſt things; though for a ſudden a godly man be drawn or driven aſide in ſome particulars, yet by reaſon of that intereſt the Spirit of Chriſt hath in him, and becauſe his aimes are right for the main, he will either recover of himſelf, or yield to the counſell of others. 3. There muſt be a right judgement allowing of the beſt waies, or elſe the heart is rotten, and infuſeth corruption into the whole converſation, ſo that all their actions become infected at the ſpring-head; they juſtifie looſeneſſe, and condemn Gods waies, as too much ſtrictneſſe; their

Ca. 15. In whom ſins of infirmity are. 1. 2. 3.

Ca. 15. 4. their principles whereby they work, are not good. 4. There must be a conjugal love to Christ, so as upon no termes they will change their Lord and husband, and yield themselves absolutely over to be ruled by their own lusts, or the lusts of others.

A Christians carriage towards Christ may in many things be very offensive, and cause some strangenesse: yet he will own Christ, and Christ him; he will not resolve upon any way wherein he knowes he must break with Christ.

Where the heart is thus in these respects qualified, *there* we must know this, that Christ counteth it his honour to passe by many infirmities, nay in infirmities he perfiteth his strength. There be some (almost) invincible infirmities, as forgetfulnesse, heavinesse of spirit, sudden passions,

A necessitatibus mea libera me Domine. Aug.

ſions, feares, &c. which though naturall, yet are for the moſt part tainted with ſin, of theſe (if the life of Chriſt be in us) we are weary, and would fain ſhake them off as a ſick man his Ague; otherwiſe it is not to be eſteemed weakneſſe ſo much as wilfulneſſe, and the more *will*, the more ſin: and little ſins, when God ſhall awake the conſcience, and *ſet them in order before us*, will prove great burthens, and not onely bruiſe a Reed, but ſhake a Cedar. Yet Gods children never ſin with full will, becauſe there is a contrary Law of the mind, whereby the dominion of ſin is broken, which alwaies hath ſome ſecret working againſt the Law of ſin. Notwithſtanding there may be ſo much *will* in a ſinfull action, as may wonderfully waſte our comfort afterward, and keep us long upon the rack of a diſquieted

Ca. 15.

Pſ. 50. 21.

Ca. 15. Peace of conscience when lost.

conscience, God in his fatherly dispensation suspending the sense of his love. So much as we give way to our will in sinning, in such a measure of distance we set our selves from comfort. Sin against conscience is as a theefe in the candle, which wasteth our *joy*, and thereby weakneth our *strength*. We must know therefore, that wilfull breaches in Sanctification, will much hinder the sense of our justification.

Quest. What course shall such take to recover their peace?

Ans. Such must give a sharp sentence against themselves, and yet cast themselves upon Gods mercy in Christ, as at their first conversion. And now they had need to claspe about Christ the faster, as they see more need in themselves; and let them remember the mildnesse of Christ here,

The way to recover our lost peace.

here, that will not quench the ſmoking flax. Ofttimes we ſee that after a deep humiliation, Chriſt ſpeaks more peace, then before, to witneſs the truth of this reconciliation, becauſe he knowes Satans enterpriſes in caſting down ſuch lower, and becauſe ſuch are moſt abaſed in themſelves, and are aſhamed to look Chriſt in the face, by reaſon of their unkindneſſe. We ſee God did not onely pardon *David*, but after much bruiſing, gave him wiſe *Solomon* to ſucced him in the Kingdom. We ſee in the *Canticles*, that the Church after ſhe had been humbled, (for her ſlighting of Chriſt) Chriſt ſweetly entertains her again, and falleth into commendation of her Beauty, we muſt know for our comfort that Chriſt was not anointed to this great work of the Mediator for leſſer ſins onely, but for the Ca. 15. Cant. 6. 4.

Ca. 16. greatest if we have but a spark of true faith to lay hold on him. Therefore if there be any bruised Reed, let him not except himself, when *Christ* doth not except him; *Come unto me all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, &c.* Why should we not make use of so gracious a disposition? we are onely therefore poore, because we know not our riches in Christ. In time of temptation rather believe Christ, then the devil, believe truth from *Truth* it self, hearken not to a liar, an enemy, and a murtherer.

Mar. 11, 28.

CHAP. XVI.

Satan not to be believed, as he representeth Christ unto us.

Use 4. SInce Christ is thus comfortably set out unto us, let us not believe Satans representations of him.

him. When we are troubled in Ca. 16.
conſcience for our ſins, his manner is then to preſent him to the afflicted ſoul as a moſt ſevere Judge armed with juſtice againſt us: But then let us preſent him to our ſoules, as thus offered to our view by God himſelf, as holding out a Scepter of mercy, and ſpreading his armes to receive us. When we think of *Joſeph*, *Daniel*, *John* the Evangeliſt, &c. we frame conceits of them with delight, as of milde and ſweet perſons; much more when we think of Chriſt, we ſhould conceive of him as a mirrour of all meekneſſe. If the ſweetneſſe of all flowers were in one, how ſweet muſt that flower needs be? In Chriſt all perfections of mercy and love meet, how great then muſt that mercy be that lodgeth in ſo gracious an heart? whatſoever tenderneſſe is ſcattered

in

Ca. 16. in *husband, father, brother, head*, all is but a beame from him, it is in him in the moſt eminent manner. We are weak, but we are his; we are deformed, but yet carry his Image upon us. A father looks not ſo much at the blemiſhes of his childe, as at his own nature in him; ſo Chriſt finds matter of love from that which is his own in us. He ſees his own nature in us: we are diſeaſed, but yet his members; who ever neglected his own members, becauſe they were ſick or weake? none ever hated his own fleſh. Can the head forget the members? Can Chriſt forget himſelf? we are his fulneſs as he is ours. He was love it ſelf clothed with mans nature, which he united ſo neer to himſelf, that he might communicate his goodneſſe the more freely unto us; And took not our

our nature when it was at the beſt, but when it was abaſed, with all naturall and common infirmities it was ſubject unto. Let us therefore abhorre all ſuſpicious thoughts, as either caſt in, or cheriſhed by that damned ſpirit, who as he laboured to divide between the Father and the Son by jealouſies, *If thou beeſt the Son of God, &c.* So his daily ſtudy is, to divide betwixt the Son and us, by breeding miſperſwaſions in us of *Chriſt*, as if there were not ſuch tender love in him to ſuch as we are. It was his art from the beginning, to diſcredit God with man, by calling Gods love into queſtion, with our firſt father *Adam*: his ſucceſſe then makes him ready at that weapon ſtill. Ca. 16. Mat 4. 6.

But for all this, I feel not Chriſt ſo to me (ſaith the ſmoking flax) but rather the *Ob.*

clean

Ca. 16. clean contrary, he seemeth to be an enemy unto me, I see and feel evidences of his just displeasure.

Ans. Christ may act the part of an enemy a little while, as *Joseph* did, but it is to make way for acting his own part of mercy in a more seasonable time; he cannot hold in his bowels long, he seemeth to wrastle with us, as with *Jacob*, but he supplies us with hidden strength, at length to get the better. Faith puls off the vizard from his face, and sees a loving heart under contrary appearances. At first he answers the woman of *Canaan*, crying after him, not a word; 2. then gives her a deniall; 3. gives an answer tending to her reproch, calling her dogge, as being without the Covenant: yet she would not be so beaten off; for she considered the end of his coming. As his

Fides Christo larvam detrahit.

his Father was never neerer him in ſtrength to ſupport him, then when he was furtheſt off in ſenſe of favour to comfort him: ſo Chriſt is never neerer us in power to uphold us, than when he ſeemeth moſt to hide his preſence from us. The influence of the *Sun* of righteouſneſs pierceth deeper than his light. In ſuch caſes whatſoever Chriſts preſent carriage is towards us, let us oppoſe his nature and office againſt it, he cannot deny himſelf, he cannot but diſcharge the office his Father hath laid upon him. We ſee here the Father hath undertaken that he ſhall not *quench the ſmoking flax*; and Chriſt again undertaking for us to the Father, appearing before him for us, untill he preſents us blameleſſe before him. The Father hath given us to Chriſt, and Chriſt giveth us back again to the Father. This

Ca. 16

Joh. 17. 6, 11.

Ca. 16. This were good comfort, if I
Obj. were but as ſmoking Flax.
Anſ. It is well that thy objection pincheth upon thy ſelf, and not upon Chriſt; it is well thou giveſt him the honour of his mercy towards others, though not to thy ſelf: but yet do not wrong the work of his Spirit in thy heart; Sathan as he ſlandereth Chriſt to us, ſo he ſlandereth us to our ſelves. If thou beeſt not ſo much as ſmoking Flax, then why doeſt thou not renounce thy intereſt in Chriſt, and diſclaim the Covenant of grace? this thou dareſt not do; why doeſt thou not give up thy ſelf wholly to other contents? this thy ſpirit wil not ſuffer thee. Whence come theſe reſtleſſe groanings and complaints? Lay this thy preſent eſtate, together with this office of Chriſt to ſuch, and do not deſpiſe the

conſolation of the Almighty, nor C 1. 16.
refuſe thy own mercy. Caſt thy ſelf into the armes of Chriſt, and if thou periſheſt, periſh there; if thou doeſt not, thou art ſure to periſh.

If mercy be to be found any where, it is there; herein appeares Chriſts care to thee, that he hath given thee a heart in ſome degree ſenſible: he might have given thee up to hardneſs, ſecurity and prophaneneſs of heart, of all ſpiritual judgements the greateſt. He that died for his enemies, will he refuſe thoſe, the deſire of whoſe ſoul is towards him? he that by his Meſſengers deſires us to be reconciled, will he put us off when we earneſtly ſeek it at his hand? No, doubtleſſe, when he prevents us by kindling holy deſires in us, he is ready to meet us in his own waies. When the Prodigall ſet him-

Ca. 16. himſelf to return to his father, his father ſtaies not for him, but
Pſ. 10. 17. meets him in the way. *When he prepares the heart to ſeek, he will cauſe his eare to hear.* He cannot find in his heart to hide himſelf long from us. If God ſhould bring us into ſuch a darke condition, as that we ſhould ſee no light from himſelf, or the creature, then let us remember what
Iſa. 50. 10. he ſaith by the Prophet *Eſay*, *He that is in darkneſſe, and ſeeth no light*, no light of comfort, no light of Gods countenance, *yet let him truſt in the Name of the Lord.* We can never be in ſuch a condition, wherein there will be juſt cauſe of utter deſpair; therefore let us do as Mariners do, caſt Ancho in the dark. Chriſt knowes how to pity us in this caſe; Look what comfort he felt from his Father *in his break-*
Iſa. 53. 5. *ings*, the like we ſhall feel from himſelf in our bruiſing. The

The ſighes of a bruiſed heart, Ca. 16.
carry in them ſome report, as of our affection to Chriſt, ſo of his care to us. The eies of our ſouls cannot be toward him, but that he hath caſt a gracious look upon us firſt; The leaſt love we have to him, is but a reflection of his love firſt ſhining upon us. As Chriſt did in his example whatſoever he gives us in charge to do, ſo he ſuffered in his own perſon whatſoever he calleth us to ſuffer, that he might the better learn to relieve and pity us in our ſufferings. In his deſertion in the Garden, and upon the Croſſe, he was content to want that unſpeakable ſolace in the preſence of his father, both to bear the wrath of the Lord for a time for us, and likewiſe to know the better how to comfort us in our greateſt extremities; God ſeeth it fit we ſhould taſte of that cup

of

Ca. 16. of which his Son drank ſo deep, that we might feel a little what ſin is, and what his Sonnes love was; but our comfort is, that Chriſt drank the dreggs of the cup for us, and will ſuccour us, that our ſpirits utterly fail not under that little taſte of his diſpleaſure which we may feel. He became not onely a man, but a curſe, a man of ſorrowes for us: He was broken, that we ſhould not be broken; He was troubled, that we ſhould not be deſperately troubled: he became a curſe, that we ſhould not be accurſed. Whatſoever may be wiſhed for in an all-ſufficient Comforter is all to be found in Chriſt. 1. Authority, from the Father all power was given him. 2. Strength in himſelf, as having his name *The Mighty* God: 3. Wiſdome, and that from his own experience how and when

Eſay. 9. 6.

to

to help: 4. Willingneſſe, as being fleſh of our fleſh, and bone of our bone. Ca. 17.

CHAP. XVII.

Reproofe of ſuch as ſin againſt this mercifull diſpoſition in Chriſt. Of quenching the Spirit.

Uſe 5. Who do offend againſt Chriſts mercy.

WE are now to take notice of divers ſorts of men that offend deeply againſt this mercifull diſpoſition of Chriſt: As, 1. Such as go on in all ill courſes of life upon this conceit, as if it were in vain to go to Chriſt, their lives have been ſo ill; when as ſo ſoon as we look to heaven, all incouragements are ready to meet us, and draw us forward. Amongſt others this is one allurement, that Chriſt is ready to welcome us, & lead us further. None are damned

Ca. 17. ed in the Church, but those that will. Such as either enforce upon themselves hard conceits of Christ, that they may have some shew of reason to fetch contentment from other things: as that Mat. 25. 30. *unprofitable servant*, that would needs take up a conceit, that his Master was *a hard man*; hereby to flatter himself in his unfruitful courses, in not *improving* that *talent* which he had.

2. 2. Such as take up an hope of their own, that Christ will suffer them to walk in the waies to hell, and yet bring them to heaven: whereas, all comfort should draw us neerer to Christ, else it is a lying comfort, either in it self, or in our application of it.

3. And 3. those that will cast water themselves upon those sparks which Christ labours to kindle in them, because they will not be troubled with the light of them.

Such

Such muſt know that the Lamb can be angry, and they that will not come under his *Scepter of Mercy*, ſhall be cruſhed in pieces by his *Scepter of Power*. Though he will graciouſly tender and maintain the leaſt ſpark of true grace, yet where he findeth not a ſpark of Grace, but oppoſition to bis Spirit ſtriving with them, his wrath once kindled ſhal burn to hel. There is no juſter provocation, than when kindneſſe is churliſhly refuſed. Ca. 17. Pſal. 2. 9.

When God would have *cured Babylon, and ſhe would not be cured*, then, *ſhe was given up to deſtruction*. Jer. 51. 9.

When *Jeruſalem would not be gathered under the wing of Chriſt*, then *their habitation is left deſolate*. Mat. 23. 37, 38.

When *Wiſedome ſtretcheth out her hand and men refuſe*, then *Wiſdome will laugh at mens deſtruction*. Pro. 1. 26.

Ca. 17. *destruction.* Salvation it self will not save those that spill the potion, and cast away the plaister. A pitifull case, when this mercifull Saviour shall delight in destruction: when he that made
Esa.27.11 men, shall have no mercy on them.

O, say the Rebels of the time, God hath not made us to damne us. Yes, if you will not meet Christ in the waies of his mercy, it is fit you should *eate the fruit of*
Pro.1.31. *your own waies, and be filled with your own devices.*

This will be the hell of hell, when men shall think, that they have loved their sins more than their soules; when they shall think, what love and mercy hath been almost inforced upon them, and yet they would perish. The more accessary we are in pulling a judgement upon our selves, the more the conscience will be confounded

founded in it ſelf, when they ſhall acknowledge Chriſt to be without all blame, themſelves without excuſe. Ca. 17.

If men appeal to their own conſciences, they will tell them, the Holy Spirit hath often knockt at their hearts, as willing to have kindled ſome holy deſires in them. How elſe can they be ſaid to reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt, but that the Spirit was readier to draw them to a further degree of goodneſſe, then ſtood with their own wills? whereupon thoſe in the Church that are damned, are ſelf-condemned before. So that here we need not riſe to higher cauſes, when men carry ſufficient cauſe in their own boſomes.

4. And the beſt of us all may offend againſt this mercifull diſpoſition, if we be not watchfull againſt that liberty of our 4.

Ca. 17. carnall dispositions will be ready to take from it. Thus we reason;

Ob. *Christ* will not quench the smoking flax, what need we fear that any neglect on our part can bring us under a comfortless condition? If *Christ* will not do it, what can?

Ans. *Answ.* You know the Apostles prohibition notwithstanding, 1 *Thes.* 5. *Quench not the Spirit.* These cautions of not quenching are sanctified by the spirit as meanes of not quenching. Christ performeth his office in not quenching, by stirring up suitable endeavours in us; and none more sollicitous in the use of the meanes, than those that are most certain of the good successe: The ground is this, The meanes that God hath set apart for the effecting of any thing, fall under the same purpose that he hath to bring that thing to passe; and this is a principle taken for granted

granted even in civil matters: as, who if he knew before it would be a fruitfull year, would therefore hang up his plough and neglect tillage? Ca. 17.

Hence the Apoſtle ſtirrs up from the certain expectation of a bleſſing; and this encouragement here from the good iſſue of finall victory, is intended to ſtir us up, and not to take us off: if we be negligent in the exerciſe of grace received, and uſe of meanes preſcribed, ſuffering our ſpirits to be oppreſſed with multitudes and variety of cares of this life, and take not heed of the damps of the times, for ſuch miſcarriage God in his wiſe care ſuffereth us oft to fall into a worſe condition for feeling, than thoſe that were never ſo much enlightned; Yet in mercy he will not ſuffer us to be ſo far enemies to our ſelves, as wholly to neglect 1 Cor. 16. ult.

How the ſpirit is quenched.

Ca. 17. theſe ſparkes once kindled; Were it poſſible that we ſhould be given up to give over all endeavour wholly, than we could look for no other iſſue but quenching; but Chriſt will tend this *ſparke*, and cheriſh this ſmall *ſeed*, ſo as he will preſerve in the ſoul alwaies ſome degree of care. If we would make a comfortable uſe of this, we muſt conſider all thoſe meanes whereby Chriſt doth preſerve Grace begun; as firſt, holy communion, whereby one Chriſtian heateth another: *Two are better than one, &c. Did not our hearts burne?* ſaid the Diſciples. Secondly, much communion with God in holy duties, as Meditation and Prayer, which doth not only kindle, but addeth to luſtre to the ſoul. Thirdly, we feel by experience the breath of the Spirit to go along with the miniſteriall breath,

Helps of not quenching.

1.

Eccl. 4. 9. Luke 24. 32.

2.

3.

breath, whereupon the Apoſtle knits theſe two together, *Quench not the Spirit: Deſpiſe not Propheſies.* *Nathan* by a few words blew up the decaying ſparkes in *David.* Rather than God will ſuffer his fire in us to die, he will ſend ſome *Nathan* or other, and ſome thing alwaies is left in us to joyne with the word as connaturall to it; as a cole that hath fire in it will quickly catch more to it. Smoking Flax will eaſily take fire. Fourthly, grace is ſtrengthned by the exerciſe of it; *Up and be doing, and the Lord be with thee,* ſaid *David* to his ſonne *Salomon;* Stirre up the grace that is in thee, for ſo holy motions turn to reſolutions, reſolutions to practiſe, and practiſe to a prepared *readineſſe to every good work.* Ca. 17. 1 Theſ 5. 19, 20. 4. 1 Chr. 22. 17.

Yet let us know that grace is increaſed in the exerciſe of it, Caution.

Ca. 17. it, not by vertue of the exercise it self, but as Christ by his Spirit floweth into the soul, and bringeth us neafer unto himself the fountain, and instilleth such comfort in the act, whereby the heart is further inlarged. The heart of a Christian is Christs Garden, and his Graces are as so many sweet spices and flowers, which his Spirit blowing upon makes them to send forth a sweet favour: therefore keep the soul open for entertainment of the Holy Ghost, for he will bring in continually fresh forces to subdue corruption, and this most of all on the Lords day. *John* was in the Spirit on the Lords day, even in *Pathmos*, the place of his banishment; then the gales of the Spirit blow more strongly and sweetly. As we look therefore for the comfort of this doctrine, let us not favour our naturall

Rev. 1. 10.

naturall ſloth, *but exerciſe our ſelves to godlineſſe*, and labour to keep this fire alwaies burning upon the Altar of our hearts, and dreſſe our Lamps daily, and put in freſh oyle; and winde up our ſoules higher and higher ſtill: reſting in a good condition is contrary to grace, which cannot but promote it ſelf to a further meaſure: Let none turn this *grace into wantonneſſe*. Infirmities are a ground of humility, not a plea for negligence, not an incouragement to preſumption. We ſhould be ſo far from *being ill*, becauſe Chriſt is *good*, as that thoſe *coales* of love ſhould melt us; therefore thoſe may well ſuſpect themſelves in whom the conſideration of this mildneſſe of Chriſt doth not work that way: Surely where grace is, corruption is as *ſmoke to their eyes, and vinegar to their teeth*. And therefore

Ca. 17.
1 Tim 4. 7

Jude 4.

Pro. 10. 26

Ca. 17. they will labour in regard of their own comfort, as likewise for the credit of Religion, and the glory of God, that their light may break forth. If a sparke of faith or love be so precious, what an honour will it be to be rich in faith? Who would not rather walk in the light, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, than to live in a dark perplexed estate? and not rather be carried with full saile to heaven, than be tossed alwaies with feares and doubts? The present trouble in conflict against a sinne, is not so much as that disquiet which any corruption favoured will bring upon us afterward: True peace is in conquering, not in yielding. The comfort in this Text intended, is for those that would fain do better, but finde their corruptions clog them; that are in

in ſuch a miſt, that oftimes they cannot tell what to think of themſelves; that fain would believe, and yet oft fear they do not believe, and think that it cannot be that God ſhould be ſo good to ſuch ſinfull wretches as they are; and yet they allow not themſelves in theſe feares and doubts. Ca. 17. 5.

And among others; How do they wrong themſelves and him, that will have other Mediators to God for them than he? Are any more pitifull than he, who became man to that end, that he might be pitifull to his own fleſh? Let all at all times repair to this meek Saviour, and put up all our ſuits in his prevailing name. What need we knock at any other door? can any be more tender over us than Chriſt? What incouragement have we to commend the ſtate of the Church in

Ca. 17. general, or of any broken-hearted Christian, unto him by our prayers? Of whom we may speak unto Christ, as they of *Lazarus*, *Lord*, the Church *which thou lovest*, and gavest thy self for, is in distresse: Lord, this poor Christi-
Esay 53. 5. an for whom thou *wert bruised*, is bruised and brought very low. It cannot but touch his bowels when the misery of his own dear bowels is spread before him.

6. Again, considering this gracious nature in Christ, let us think with our selves thus; When he is so kind unto us, shall we be cruel against him in his name, in his truth, in his children? how shall those that delight to be so terri-
Zech. 2. 3. ble *to the meek of the earth*, hope to look so gracious a Saviour in the face? they that are so boysterous towards his *Spouse*, shall know one day they had to deal with himself in his Church. So it cannot

cannot but cut the heart of thoſe Ca. 17.
that have felt this love of Chriſt,
to heare him wounded who is the
life of their lives, and the ſoul of
their ſoules: this maketh thoſe
that have felt mercy, weep over
Chriſt whom they have pierced
with their ſins; there cannot but
be a mutuall and quick ſmypa-
thie between the *Head* and the
Members. When we are temp-
ted to any ſin, if we will not pi-
tie our ſelves, yet we ſhould
ſpare Chriſt, in not putting him
to new torments. The Apo-
ſtle could not find out a more
heart-breaking argument to en-
force a ſacrificing our ſelves to
God, than to conjure us by the
mercies of God in Chriſt.

This mercy of Chriſt like- Ro. 12.
wiſe ſhould move us to commi- 1.
ſerate the ſtate of the poor
Church torn by enemies with-
out, and renting it ſelf by divi-
ſions

Ca. 17. sions at home. It cannot but work upon any soul that ever felt comfort from Christ, to consider what an affectionate intreaty the Apostle useth to mutuall agreement in judgement and affection.

Phil. 2. 1. *If any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill my joy, be like-minded:* As if he should say, unlesse you will disclaim all consolation in Christ, &c. labour to maintaine the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. What a joyfull spectacle is this to Satan and his faction, to see those that are separated from the world, fall in pieces among themselves? Our discord is our enemies melody.

The more to blame those that for private aimes affect differences from others, and will not suffer the wounds of the Church

to

to cloſe and meet together. Which muſt not be underſtood, as if men ſhould diſſemble their judgement in any truth where there is juſt cauſe of expreſſing themſelves; for the leaſt truth is Chriſts and not ours, and therefore we are not to take liberty to affirm or deny at our pleaſures: there is a due in a peny as well as in a pound, therefore we muſt be faithful in the leaſt truth; when ſeaſon calleth for it, then our *words are like Appls of gold with pictures of ſilver.* Onc word ſpoken in ſeaſon will do more good than a thouſand out of ſeaſon. But in ſome caſes, peace, by *keeping our faith to our ſelves*, is of more conſequence, than the open diſcovery of ſome things we take to be true; conſidering the weakneſſe of mans nature is ſuch, that there can hardly be a diſcovery of any difference in opinion, with- Ca. 17. Ro. 14. 22.

Ga. 17. without some estrangment of affection. So far as men are not of one mind, they will hardly be of one heart, except where grace
Col 3.15. and the *peace of God* bear great rule in the heart: therefore open shew of difference is never good but when it is necessary; howsoever some, from a desire to be some-body, turn into by-waies, and yield to a spirit of contradiction in themselves; yet if S.
1 Cor. 3 3. *Paul* may be Judge, *Are they not carnall?* if it be wisdome, it is wisedome from beneath; for the wisdome from above, as it is
Jam. 3.17. pure, so it is peaceable. Our blessed Saviour when he was to leave the world, what doth he presse upon his Disciples more than peace and love? And in his last prayer with what earnestness did he beg of his Father that
John 17. *They might be one as he and the Father were one?* But what he pray-

prayed for on earth, we ſhall one- Ca. 17.
ly enjoy perfectly in heav. n. Let
this make the meditation of that
time the more ſweet unto us.

And further to lay open of- 8.
fenders in this kind, what ſpirit
ſhall we think them to be of, that
take advantages of the bruiſed-
neſſe and infirmities of mens ſpi-
rits, to relieve them with falſe
peace for their own worldly
ends? A wounded ſpirit will part
with any thing. Moſt of the gain-
full points of Popery, as confeſ-
ſion, ſatisfaction, merit, Purga-
tory, &c. ſpring from hence;
but they are Phyſitians of no
value, or rather tormen-
tors than Phyſitians at all. It
is a greater bleſſing to be delive-
red from the *ſting of theſe Scorpi-
ons*, than we are thankfull for.
Spirituall tyranny is the greateſt
tyranny, and then eſpecially,
when it is where moſt mercy
ſhould

Ca. 17. ſhould be ſhewed; yet even there ſome (like cruel Surgeons) delight in making long cures, to ſerve themſelves upon the miſery of others. It bringeth men un-
Pſ. 109. 16 der a terrible curſe, *When they will not remember to ſhew mercy, but perſecute the poor and needy man, that they might even ſlay the broken in heart.*

Likewiſe to ſuch as raiſe tẽporal advantage to themſelves out of the ſpiritual miſery of others: joyn ſuch as raiſe eſtates by betraying the Church, and are unfaithful in the truſt commited unto them: when the children ſhall cry for the bread of life, & there is none to give them, bringing thus upon the people of God that heavy judgmẽt of a ſpiritual famine, ſtarving Chriſt in his members. Shal we ſo requite ſo good a Saviour, who counteth the love and
John 21. 15. mercy ſhewed *in feeding his Lambs*, as ſhewed to himſelf? Laſt

Laſt of all; they carry themſelves very unkindly towards *Chriſt*, who ſtumble at this his low ſtooping unto us in his *government* and *ordinances*, that are *aſhamed* of the ſimplicity of *the Goſpel*, that count Preaching fooliſhneſſe. Ca. 17.

They out of the pride of their heart think they may do well enough without the help of the *Word* and *Sacraments*; and think Chriſt took not ſtate enough upon him, and therefore they will mend the matter with their own devices, whereby they may give the better content to fleſh and blood, as in Popery. What greater unthankfulneſſe can there be then to deſpiſe any help that Chriſt in mercy hath provided for us; In the daies of his fleſh, the proud *Phariſees* took offence at his familiar converſing with ſinfull men, who onely

Ch. 17. onely did ſo, as a Phyſitian to heal their ſoules. What defences was S. *Paul* driven to make for himſelf, for his plainneſſe in unfolding the Goſpel? The more Chriſt in himſelf, and in his ſervants ſhall deſcend to exalt us, the more we ſhould with all humility and readineſſe entertain that love, and magnifie the goodneſſe of God that hath put the great work of our Salvation, and laid the government upon ſo gentle a Saviour, that will carry himſelf ſo mildly in all things wherein he is to deal betwixt God and us, and us and God; The lower Chriſt comes down to us, the higher let us lift him up in our hearts: ſo will all thoſe do that have ever found the experience of Chriſts work in their heart.

CHAP.

Ca,18.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of Chriſts judgement in us: and his victory. What it is.

WE come to the third part, the conſtant progreſſe of Chriſts gracious power, untill he hath ſet up ſuch an abſolute government in us, which ſhall prevaile over all corruptions. It is ſaid here, he will cheriſh his Beginnings of Grace in us, untill he bring forth *judgement unto victory*. By *judgement* here is meant the Kingdome of grace in us, that government whereby Chriſt ſets up a Throne in our hearts. *Governors* among the *Jewes* were firſt called *Judges*, then *Kings*: whence this inward rule is called *judgement*; as likewiſe, becauſe it agrees unto the judgement of the word, which the *Pſalmiſt* oft cal- Judgements. Victory. Pſ. 72. 1, 2.

Ca. 18. calleth *judgement*, becauſe it agreeth to Gods judgement: Men may read their doom in Gods word, what it judgeth of them, God judgeth of them. By this judgement ſet up in us, good is diſcerned, allowed and performed; ſin is judged, condemned and executed. Our ſpirit being under the ſpirit of Chriſt, is governed by him, and ſo far as it is governed by Chriſt it governes us graciouſly.

Chriſt and we are of one judgment, and of one will; he hath his will in us, and his judgements are ſo inveſted into us, as that they are turned into our judgement, we carrying *his Law in our hearts, written by his Spirit:* the law in the inner man and the Law written anſwer as counterpaines each other.

Jer. 31. 33.

The meaning then is, that the gracious frame of holineſſe

ſet

ſet up in our hearts by the Spirit of Chriſt, ſhall go forward untill all contrary power be brought under. The ſpirit of judgement will *be a ſpirit of burning*, to conſume whatſoeveroppoſed corruption like ruſt eats into the ſoul. If Gods builders fall into errors, and *build ſtubble* upon a good foundation, Gods Spirit as a ſpirituall *fire will reveal this in time*, and waſte it: they ſhall by a ſpirit of judgement condemn their own errors & courſes. The whole work of grace in us it ſet out under the name of judgement, & ſometims wiſdom, becauſe judgement is the chief & leading part in grace; whereupon that gracious work of repentance is called a change of the mind, and an after-wiſdome. As on the other ſide, in the learned lāguages, the words that do expreſs wiſdom imply likewiſe the generall reliſh and ſavour

Ca. 18.

Eſay 4.4.

1 Cor. 3.13

μετά. νοια.

Ca. 18. of the whole soul: and rather
φρονεῖν. more the judgement of taste,
Sapere. then of sight, or any other sense, because taste is the most necessary sense, and requireth the neerest application of the object of all other senses. So in spiritu-all life, it is most necessary that the spirit should alter the taste of the soul, so as that it might savour the things of the spirit so deeply, that all other things should be out of relish.

And as it is true of every particular Christian, that Christs judgement in him shall be victorious, so likewise of the whole body of Christians, *the Church*. The government of Christ and his truth whereby he ruleth as by a Scepter, shall at length be victorious in spight of Satan, Antichrist, and all Enemies. Christ, *riding on his white horse*,
Rev. 6. 2. hath *a Bow*, and goeth forth *con-*
Rev. 19. 11

quering

quering in the miniſtry, that he may overcome either to converſion or to confuſion. But yet I take Judgement for Chriſts Kingdom and government within us, principally. 1. Beſides God eſpecially requireth the ſubjection of the ſoul and conſcience, as his proper Throne. 2. Becauſe if judgement ſhould prevaile in all other about us and not in our own hearts, it would not yield comfort to us; hereupon it is the firſt thing that we deſire when we pray, *Thy Kingdome come*, That Chriſt would come and rule in our hearts: The Kingdome of Chriſt in his ordinances ſerves but to bring Chriſt home into his own place, our hearts. Ca. 18.

The words being thus explained, that judgement here includeth the government of both mind, will, and affections, there are divers concluſions that naturally

Ca. 19. naturally do ſpring from them.

Chap. XIX.

Chriſt ſo is mild that yet he will govern thoſe that enjoy the comfort of his mildneſſe.

Concluſion.

THe firſt concluſion from the connexion of this part of the verſe with the former, is, that Chriſt is upon thoſe terms mild, ſo that he will ſet up his government in thoſe whom he is ſo gentle and tender over. He ſo pardons as he will be obeyed as a King; He ſo taketh us to be his Spouſe, as he will be obeyed as an husband; the ſame ſpirit that convinceth us of the neceſſity of his righteouſneſſe to cover us, convinceth us alſo of the neceſſity of his government to rule us. His love to us moveth him to frame us to be like himſelf, and

our

our love to him ſtirreth us up to Ca. 19.
be ſuch as he may take delight in, neither have we any more faith or hope then care to be purged as he is pure; he maketh us ſubordinate governors, yea Kings under himſelf, giving us grace not onely to ſet againſt, but to ſubdue in ſome meaſure our baſe affections. It is one main fruit of Chriſts exaltation that he may turn every one of us from our wickedneſſe. *Acts* 3.26. *For this end Chriſt dyed and roſe again and liveth, that he ſhould be Lord of the dead and living.* *Rom.*14.9. God hath bound himſelf by an oath that he would grant us, that *without fear we might ſerve him in holineſſe and righteouſneſſe in his* Luk.1.75. *ſight*, not onely in the ſight of the world.

1 This may ſerve for a triall to diſcerne who may lay juſt claim to Chriſts mercy; onely

Ca. 19. those that will take his yoke, and count it a greater happinesse to be under his government, then to enjoy any liberty of the flesh; that will take whole Christ, and not single out of him what may stand with their present contentment; that will not divide Lord from Jesus, and so make a Christ of their own: none ever did truely desire mercy pardoning, but desired mercy healing. *David* prayeth for a new spirit, as well as for sense of pardoning mercy.

Who may lay claim to mercy.

Psal. 51.

2 This sheweth that those are mis-led, that make Christ to be onely righteousnesse to us, and not sanctification, except by imputation: whereas it is a great part of our happinesse to be under such a Lord, who was not onely *born* for us, and *given unto us*, but *hath the government likewise upon his shoulders*, that is our

Isa. 9, 6, 7.

our Sanctifier as well as our Saviour, our Saviour as well by the effectuall power of his Spirit from the power of ſin, as by the merit of his death from the guilt thereof; So that this 1. be remembred, that the firſt and chief ground of our comfort is, that Chriſt as a Prieſt offered himſelf as a ſacrifice to his Father for us. The guilty ſoul flyeth firſt to Chriſt crucified made a curſe for us. Thence it is that Chriſt hath right to govern us, thence it is that he giveth us his ſpirit as our guide to lead us home. Ca. 19. 1. Caution. 2.

2. In the courſe of our life after that we are in ſtate of grace, and be overtaken with any ſin, we muſt remember to have recourſe firſt unto Chriſts mercy to pardon us, and then to the promiſe of his Spirit to govern us.

3. And when we feel our ſelves 3.

Ca. 19. cold in affection and duty, it is the beſt way to warme our ſelves at this fire of his love and mercy in giving himſelfe for us.

4. 4. Again, remember this, that Chriſt, as he ruleth us, ſo it is by a ſpirit of love from a ſenſe of his love, whereby his commandements are eaſie to us; he leadeth us by his free Spirit, a Spirit of liberty: his ſubjects are voluntaries; the conſtraint that he layeth upon his ſubjects, is that of love: he draweth us with the cords of love ſweetly. Yet remember withall, that he draweth us ſtrongly by a ſpirit of power, for it is not ſufficient, that we have motives and encouragements to love and obey Chriſt from that love of his, whereby he gave himſelf for us to juſtifie us; but Chriſts ſpirit muſt likewiſe ſubdue our hearts,

and

and ſanctifie them to love him, Ca. 19.
without which all motives would be uneffectuall. Our diſpoſition muſt be changed, we muſt be new creatures; They ſeek for heaven in hell, that ſeek for ſpirituall love in an unchanged heart. When a child obeyes his father, it is ſo from reaſons perſwading him, as likewiſe from a child-like nature which giveth ſtrength to theſe reaſons: It is naturall for a child of God, to love Chriſt ſo far as he is renewed, not onely from inducement of reaſon ſo to do, but likewiſe from an inward principle and work of grace, whence thoſe reaſons have their chief forces; firſt, we are made partakers of the divine nature, and then we are eaſily induced and led by Chriſts Spirit to ſpirituall duties.

Ca. 20.

Chap. XX.

The spirituall government of Christ is joyned with judgement and wisdome.

The second conclusion hath two branches.

THe 2 conclusion is, that Christs government in his Church and in his children is a wise and well-ordered government, because it is called judgement, and judgement is the life and soul of wisdome. Of this conclusion there are two branches; 1. That the spirituall government of Christ in us is joyned with judgement and wisdom. 2. Wheresoever true spirituall wisdom and judgement is, there likewise the Spirit of Christ bringeth in his gracious government. For the first, a well guided life by the rules of Christ, standeth with the strongest and highest reason of all; and there-

1.

fore

fore holy men are called the *children of wiſdome*, and are able to *juſtifie* both by reaſon and experience all the waies of wiſdome. Oppoſite courſes are *folly and madneſſe*. Hereupon S. *Paul* ſaith, that a *ſpirituall man judgeth all things* that appertain to him, *and is judged of none* that are of an inferiour rank, becauſe they want ſpirituall light and ſight to judge; yet this ſort of men will be judging, *and ſpeaking ill of what they know not*, they ſtep from ignorance to prejudice and raſh cenſure, without taking right judgement in their way, and therefore their judgement comes to nothing. But the judgement of a ſpirituall man, ſo far forth as he is ſpirituall, ſhall ſtand, becauſe it is agreeable to the nature of things: as things are in themſelves, ſo they are in his judgement. As God is in himſelf infi-

Ca. 20. Luc. 7. 31.

1 Cor. 2. 15.

2 Pet. 2. 12.

Ca. 20. nite in goodneſſe and majeſtie, &c. ſo he is to him, he aſcribes to God in his heart his divinity and all his excellencies. As Chriſt is in himſelf the onely Mediatour, Col. 3.11. and *All in All* in the Church, ſo he is to him, by making Chriſt Phil. 3.8. ſo in his heart. *As all things are dung in compariſon of Chriſt*, ſo they are to *Paul* a ſanctified man. As the very worſt thing in Religion, *the reproch of Chriſt is better then the pleaſure of ſin for a ſeaſon*; Heb. 11. 26. ſo it is to *Moſes*, a man of a right *eſteem*. *As one day in the* Pſ. 84.10. *Courts of God is better then a thouſand elſewhere*; ſo it is to *David*, a man of a reformed judgement. There is a conformity of a goodm ans judgement to things as they are in themſelves, and according to the difference or agreement put by God in things, ſo doth his judgement differ or agree.

Truth

Truth is truth, and error error, Ca. 20.
and that which is unlawfull is unlawfull whether men think so or no. God hath put an eternal difference betwixt light and darkneſſe, good and ill, which no creatures conceit can alter; and therefore no mans judgement is the meaſure of things further than it agrees to truth ſtampt upon things themſelves by God. Hereupon becauſe a wiſe mans judgement agrees to the truth of things, a wiſe man may in ſome ſenſe be ſaid to be the meaſure of things; and the judgement of one holy wiſe man to be preferred before a thouſand others. Such men uſually are immoveable as the Sun in its courſe, becauſe they think, and ſpeak, and live by rule. *A Joſuah and his houſe will ſerve* Ioſ. 24. 15.
God, whatſoever others do; and will run a courſe contrary to the world, becauſe their judgements

Ca. 20. leads them a contrary way. Hence it is that Sathan hath a spite at the eye of the soul, the judgement, to put out that by ignorance and false reason, for he cannot rule in any untill either he hath taken away or perverted judgement: he is a *Prince of darkness*, and ruleth in darkness of the understanding. Therefore he must first be cast out of the understanding by the prevailing of truth, and planting it in the soul. Those therefore that are enemies of knowledge, help *Satan* and *Antichrist* (whose kingdom like Satans is a kingdom of darkness) to erect their throne. Hence it is promised by Christ, that the *Holy Ghost shall convince the world of judgement*; that is, that he is resolved to set up a Throne of government, because the great Lord of mis-rule *Sathan, the Prince of the world is judged* by the Gospel,

Joh. 16. 8.

and

and the Spirit accompanying it, Ca. 20
his impostures are discovered, his enterprizes laid open; therefore when the Gospel was spread, the Oracles ceased, *Satan fell from heaven like lightning*, men were *translated out of his Kingdome into Christs*. Where prevailing is by lies, there discovery is victory: *They shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest to all.* So that manifestation of errour giveth a stop to it, for none will willingly be deceived. Let truth have full scope without check or restraint, and let Satan and his instruments do their worst, they shall not prevaile; as *Jerome* saith of the *Pelagians* in his time. The discovery of your opinions is the vanquishing of them, your blasphemies appear at the first blush.

Luc. 10. 18. Col. 1. 13. 2 Tim. 3. 9.

Sententias vestras prodidisse, superasse est. Hier. in Epist. ad Ctesiphon: primo fronte apparent blasphemiæ.

Hence we learn the necessity that the understanding be principled

Use.

Ca. 20. The necessity of knowledg. principled with supernaturall knowledge for the well managing of a Christian conversation.

There must be light to discover a further end then nature, for which we are Christians, and a rule surable directing to that end, which is the wil of God in Christ, discovering his *good* pleasure toward us, and our duty towards him; and in vertue of this discovery we do all that we do, that any way may further our reckoning: Mat. 6. 22. *The eye must first be single, and then the whole body and frame of our conversation will be light*: otherwise both we and our course of life are nothing but darkness; The whole conversation of a Christian is nothing else but knowledge digested into will, affection, & practice. If the concoction in the stomach be not good, that in the liver cannot be good:

so

so if there be errour in the judgement, it marres the whole practice, as an errour in the foundation doth the building: God will have *no blind sacrifices, no unreasonable services*, but will have us to *love him with all our mind*, that is, with our understanding part as well as *with all our hearts*, that is, the affecting part of the soul. Ca. 20

Mal. 1. 13. Rom. 12. 1. Luk. 10. 27.

This order of Christs government by judgement, is agreeable unto the soul, and God delighteth to preserve the manner of working peculiar unto man, that is, to do what he doth out of judgement: as grace supposeth nature as founded upon it, so the frame of grace preserveth the frame of nature in man. And therefore Christ bringeth all that is good in the soul through judgement, and that so sweetly, that many out of a dangerus error think,

Ca. 20. think, that that good wch is in thē & issueth frō them, is frō thē-selves, and not from the powerful work of grace. As in *evill*, the Devill so subtilly leadeth us according to the stream of our own nature, that men think that Sathan had no hand in their sin: but here a mistake is with little peril, because we are ill of our selves, and the devil doth but promote what ill he findeth in us. But there are no seeds of supernaturall goodnesse at all in us, God findeth nothing in us but enmity; onely he hath engraven this in our nature to incline in generall to that which we judge to be good. Now when he shall clearly discover, what is good in particular, we are carried to it; and when convincingly he shall discover that which is ill, we abhorre it as freely as we embraced it before.

From

From whence we may know, Ca. 2
when we work as we ſhould do or no, that is, when we do what we do out of *inward principles*, when we fall not upon that which is good, onely becauſe we are ſo bred, or becauſe ſuch or ſuch whom we reſpect do ſo, or becauſe we will maintain a ſide, ſo making Religion a faction; but out of *judgement*, when what we do that is good, we firſt judge it in our ſelves ſo to be; and what we abſtain from that is ill, we firſt judge it to be ill from an *inward* judgement. A ſound Chriſtian as he enjoyeth the *better part*, ſo hath firſt made *choice* of it with *Mary*, *he eſtabliſheth all his thoughts by counſell.* God indeed uſeth carnall men to very good ſervice, but without a thorow altering, and conviction of their judgement. He worketh by them, but not in them, therefore they do nei- Luk. 10. 42.

21. neither approve the good they do, nor hate the evil they abstain from.

CHAP. XXI.

Where true wisdom & judgement is there Christ sets up his government.

branch 2. THe 2. branch is, that wheresoever true wisdome and judgement is, there Christ hath set up his government, because where wisdom is, it directs us not onely to understand, but to order our waies aright, where *Christ* by his Spirit as a *Prophet teaches*, he likewise as a *King* by his Spirit subdueth the heart to obedience of what is taught. This is that teaching which is promised of God, whē not onely the brain, but the heart it self is taught: Whē men do not onely know what they should do, but are taught

taught the very doing of it, they are not onely taught that they ſhould love, fear, and obey, but they are taught love it ſelf, and feare and *obedience* it ſelf. Chriſt ſets up his chaire in the very heart, and alters the frame of that, and makes his ſubjects good, together with teaching of them to be good. Other Princes can make good Laws, but they *cannot write them in their peoples hearts.* This is Chriſts prerogative, he infuſeth into his ſubjects his own Spirit: *upon him there doth not onely reſt the ſpirit of wiſdome and underſtanding*, but likewiſe *the ſpirit of the fear of the Lord.* The knowledge which we have of him from himſelf, is a *transforming* knowledge. The ſame ſpirit that enlightneth the mind, inſpireth gracious inclinations into the will and affections, and infuſeth ſtrength into the whole man. As a gracious

Ca. 21.

Ier. 32.

Eſay 11. 2.

2 Cor. 3. 18.

Ca. 21 gracious man judgeth as he ſhould, ſo he affecteth and doth as he judgeth, his life is a commentary of his inward man; there is a ſweet harmony betwixt Gods *truth*, his *judgement*, and his whole *converſation*. The heart of
Pſ. 122. 3. a Chriſtian is like *Jeruſalem* when it was at the beſt, a City compact within it ſelf; where are *ſet up the Thrones of judgement*: Judgement ſhould have a throne in the heart of every Chriſtian. Not that judgement alone will work a change, there muſt be grace to alter the bent and ſway of the will, before it will yield to be wrought upon by the underſtanding. But God hath ſo joyned theſe together, as that whenſoever he doth ſavingly ſhine upon the underſtanding, he giveth a ſoft and pliable heart; for without a work upon the heart by the Spirit of God, it will

will follow its own inclination Ca. 21.
that which it affecteth, whatſoever the judgement ſhall ſay to the contrary: there is no connaturall proportion betwixt an unſanctified heart and a ſanctified judgement. For the heart unaltered will not give leave to the judgement coldly and ſoberly to conclude what is beſt: As the ſick man whilſt his *aguiſh* diſtemper corrupteth his taſte, is rather deſirous to pleaſe *that*, then to hearken what the Phyſitian ſhall ſpeak. Judgement hath not power over it ſelf, where the will is unſubdued, for the will and affections bribe it to give ſentence for them when any profit or pleaſure ſhal come in competition with that which the judgement in generall onely ſhall think to be good; and therefore it is for the moſt part in the power of the heart, what the underſtanding

ſhall

Ca. 2 r shall judge and determine in particular things. Where grace hath brought the heart under, there unruly passions do not cast such a mist before the understanding, but that in particular it seeth that which is best; and base respects springing from self-love do not alter the case, and byas the judgement into a contrary way, but that which is good in it self shall be good unto us, although it crosse our particular worldly interests.

Use. The right conceiving of this hath an influence into practice, which hath drawn me to a more full explanation: this will teach us the right method of godlinesse, to begin with judgement, and then to beg of God together with illumination, holy inclinations of our will and affections, that so a perfect government may be set up in our hearts, and that our

know-

knowledge may be with all judge- Ca. 21.
ment, that is, with experience and Phil. 1. 9.
feeling: when the judgement of
Chriſt is ſet up in our judge-
ments, and thence by the Spirit of
Chriſt brought into our hearts,
then it is in its proper place and
throne, and untill then truth
doth us no good, but helpeth to
condemn us. The life of a Chri-
ſtian is a regular life, and he that Gal. 6. 16.
walketh by the rule of the new
creature, peace ſhall be upon Pro. 19. 16
him; *he that deſpiſeth his way, and*
loveth to live at large, ſeeking all
liberty to the fleſh, *ſhall die*. And
it is made good by Saint *Paul*,
If we live after the fleſh, we ſhall Rom. 8. 13
dye.

We learn likewiſe that men of *Uſe* 2.
an ill governed life have no true
judgement: no wicked man can be
a wiſe man. And that without
Chriſts Spirit the ſoul is in
confuſion, without beauty and
form,

Ca. 2 1. form, as all things were in the Chaos before the creation. The whole soul is out of joynt til it be set in again, by him whose office is to *restore all things*. The baser part of the soul which should be subject, ruleth all, and keepeth under that little truth that is in the understanding, holding it captive to base affections; and Satan by corruption getteth all the holds of the soul, *till* Christ stronger then he cometh, and driveth him out, and taketh possession of all the powers and parts of soul and body, to be *weapons of righteousnesse, to serve him*, and then new Lords new Lawes, Christ as a new Conqueror changeth the fundamentall lawes of old *Adam*, and establisheth a government of his own.

CHAP.

Ca. 22.

CHAP. XXII.

Chriſts government is victorious.

THe third concluſion is, that this *government is victorious.* 3 Concluſion.
The reaſons are.

1. Becauſe Chriſt hath conquered all in his own perſon firſt, and he *is God over all, bleſſed for evermore*; and therefore over *Sin, Death, Hell, Sathan, the World, &c.* And as he hath overcome them in himſelf, ſo he overcomes them in our hearts and conſciences. We uſe to ſay, Conſcience maketh a man a King or a Caitiffe, becauſe it is planted in us to judge for God, either with us, or againſt us; now if naturall conſcience be ſo forcible, what will it be when beſides its own light it hath the light of divine truth put into it? It will undoubtedly prevaile, either to make us hold The reaſons why Chriſts government is victorious. Rom. 9. 5. 1.

Ca.22. hold up our heads with boldness, or abase us beneath our selves. If it subject it self by grace to Christs truth, then it boldly over-lookes *Death*, *Hell*, *Judgement*, and all spirituall enemies, because then Christ sets up his Kingdome in the conscience, and makes it a kind of Paradise.

The sharpest conflict which the soul hath, is between the conscience and Gods justice: now if the conscience sprinkled with the blood of Christ, hath prevailed over assaults fetcht from the justice of God as now satisfied by Christ, it will prevaile over all other opposition whatsoever.

2. 2 We are to encounter with accursed and damned enemies; therefore if they begin to fall before the Spirit in us, they shall fall: if they rise up again, it is to have the greater fall.

3. 3. The Spirit of truth to whose tuition

tuition. Chriſt hath committed his *Church*, and the truth of the Spirit which is the Scepter of Chriſt, abide for ever; therefore the ſoul begotten by the immortall ſeed of the Spirit and this truth, muſt not onely live for ever, bnt likewiſe prevail over all that oppoſe it, for both the word and ſpirit are *mighty in operation*; and if the ill ſpirit be never idle in thoſe whom God delivereth up to him, we cannot think that the Holy Spirit will be idle in thoſe whoſe leading and government is committed to him. No, as he dwelleth in them, ſo he will drive out all that riſe up againſt him, untill he be all in all. Ca. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 23. Heb. 4. 12.

What is ſpirituall is eternall; truth is a beam of Chriſts Spirit both in it ſelf, and as it is ingrafted into the ſoul, therefore it, and the grace (though little)

Ca. 22. wrought by it, will prevaile; a little thing in the hand of a Giant will do great matters. A little faith strengthened by Christ will work wonders.

4. Mat. 25. 29. Jos. 10. 25. 4 *To him that hath shall be given*; the victory over any corruption or temptation, is a pledge of finall victory. As *Joshua* said when he set his foot upon the five Kings which he conquered; *Thus God shall do with all our enemies*, heaven is ours already, onely we strive till we have full possession.

5. Luc. 1. 33. 5 Christ as King brings in a commanding light into the soul, and bows the neck, and softens the Iron sinew of the inner man, and where he begins to rule, he rules for ever, *his Kingdome hath no end.*

6. 1 Joh. 3. 8. Why Christ rose again. 6 The end of Christs coming, was to destroy the works of the devil, both for us and in us: And the

the end of the reſurrection was, Ca. 22
as to ſeal unto us the aſſurance of his victory; So 1, to quicken our ſoules from death in ſin, 2, to free 1.
our ſoules from ſuch ſnares and 2.
ſorrowes of ſpiritual death as accompany the guilt of ſin, 3, to 3.
raiſe them up more comfortable, as the Sun breakes forth more gloriouſly out of a thick cloud 4, to raiſe us out of particular 4.
ſlips, and failings, ſtronger, 5, to 5.
raiſe us out of all troubleſome and dark conditions of this life: And 6, at length to raiſe our bodies 6.
out of the duſt. For the ſame power that the Spirit ſhewed in raiſing Chriſt our *Head*, from the ſorrowes of death, and the loweſt degree of his abaſement; the ſame power obtained by the death of Chriſt from God now appeaſed by that ſacrifice, will the ſpirit ſhew in the Church which is his body, and in every

Ca. 22. particular member thereof.

And this power is conveyed by faith, whereby after union with Chriſt in both his eſtates of humiliation and exaltation, we ſee our ſelves not onely *dead with*
1 Eph 3. *Chriſt*, but *riſen and ſitting together with him in heavenly places.* Now we apprehending our ſelves to be dead, and riſen, and thereupon victorious over all our enemies in our *head*; and apprehending that his ſcope in all this is to conform us to himſelf, we are by
2 Cor. 3. 18. this faith *changed into his likeneſs*, and ſo become conquerers over all our ſpirituall enemies as he is, by that power which we derive from him, who is the ſtore-houſe of all ſpiritual ſtrength for all his: Chriſt at length will have his end in us, and faith reſteth aſſured of it, and this aſſurance is very operative, ſtirring us up to joyne with Chriſt in his ends.

And

And ſo for the Church in general, by Chriſt it will have its victory: Chriſt is that *little ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands that breaketh in pieces that goodly image*, that is, all oppoſite government, until it become *a great mountain, & filleth the whole earth.* So that the ſtone that was cut out of the mountain, becoms a mountain it ſelf at length. Who art thou then, O mountain, that thinkeſt to ſtand up againſt this mountain? all ſhal lie flat and level before it: He will bring down all mountainous high exalted thoughts, and lay the pride of all fleſh low. When chaffe ſtrives againſt the winde, ſtubble againſt the fire, when the heel kicks againſt the pricks, when the potſheard ſtrives with the potter, when man ſtrives againſt God, it is eaſie to know on which ſide the victory will goe. The Ca. 22. Dan. 2. 35.

Ca. 22. winds may toſſe the ſhip wherein Chriſt is, but not overturne it. The waves may daſh againſt the rock, but they do but break themſelves againſt it.

Ob. If this be ſo, why is it thus with the Church of God, and with many a gracious Chriſtian? the victory ſeemeth to go with the enemy.

Anſ. For anſwer, remember, 1, Gods children uſually in their troubles overcome by ſuffering, here Lambs overcome Lions, and Doves Eagles by ſuffering, that herein they may be conformable to Chriſt who conquered moſt, when he ſuffered moſt; together with Chriſts kingdome of patience there was a Kingdome of power.

1. How Gods Children overcome.

2. This victory is by degrees, and therefore they are too haſty ſpirited that would conquer ſo ſoon as they ſtrike the firſt ſtroke, and

and be at the end of their race at the firſt ſetting forth: the *Iſraelites* were ſure of victory in their voiage to *Canaan*, yet they muſt fight it out. God would not have us preſently forget what cruel enemies Chriſt hath overcome for us; *deſtroy them not, leſt the people forget it* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) That ſo by the experience of that annoyance we have by them, we might be kept in fear to come under the power of them. Ca. 22. Pſ. 59. 11.

3. That God often worketh by contraries; when he meanes to give victory, he will ſuffer us to be foiled at firſt; when he means to comfort, he will terrifie firſt; when he means to juſtify, he will condemn us firſt; whom he means to make glorious, he will abaſe firſt; A Chriſtian conquers even when he is conquered; when he is conquered by ſome ſins, he gets victory over others more

Ca. 22. dangerous, *as ſpirituall pride, ſecurity, &c.*

4. 4 That Chriſts work both in the Church, and in the hearts of Chriſtians, often goeth backward, that it may go the better forward: As ſeed rots in the ground in the Winter time, but after comes better up; and the harder the Winter, the more flouriſhing the Spring; ſo we learne to ſtand by falls, and get ſtrength by weakneſs diſcovered; we take deeper root by ſhaking; and as torches flame brighter by moving, thus it pleaſeth Chriſt out of his freedom, in this manner to maintain his government in us. Let us herein labour to exerciſe our faith, that it may anſwer *Chriſts* manner of carriage towards us: when we are toiled, let us believe we ſhall overcome; when we are fallen, let us believe we ſhall riſe again. *Iacob* after he had

Virtutis cuſtos infirmitas.

had a *blow upon which he halted*, Ca. 22.
yet *would not give over wreſtling* Gen. 32.
till he had gotten the *bleſsing*; ſo 24.
let us never give over, but in our thoughts knit the beginning, progreſſe, and end together, and then we ſhall ſee our ſelves in heaven out of the reach of all enemies. Let us aſſure our ſelves that Gods grace even in this imperfect eſtate, is ſtronger then mans free-will in the ſtate of firſt perfection, being founded now in Chriſt, who as he is the *Author*, ſo will be *the finiſher of our* Heb. 12. 2.
faith; we are under a more gracious covenant.

That which ſome ſay of faith *rooted*, that it continueth, but weak faith may come to nothing, ſeemeth to be croſſed by this Scripture: For as the ſtrongeſt faith may be ſhaken, ſo the weakeſt where truth is, is ſo far rooted, that it will prevaile. *Fides radicata.* How weake faith prevailes.

Ca. 22. Weakness with watchfulness will stand out, when strength with too much confidence faileth. Weakness with acknowledging of it, is the fittest seat and subject for God to perfect his strength in; for consciousness of our infirmities driveth us out of our selves to him in whom our strength lyeth.

Hereupon it followeth, that weakness may stand with the assurance of salvation; the disciples notwithstanding all their weaknesses, are bidden to *rejoyce* that their names are written in heaven. Failings (with conflict) in sanctification should not weaken the peace of our justification, and assurance of salvation. It mattereth not so much, what ill is in us, as what good: not what corruptions, but how we stand affected to them: not what our particular failings be so much,

Luc. 10. 20.

as

as what is the thred and tenour of our lives: for Chriſts miſlike of that which is amiſſe in us, redounds not to the hatred of our perſons, but to the victorious ſubduing of all our infirmities. Ca. 2

Some have after conflict wondered at the goodneſſe of God, that ſo little and ſhaking faith ſhould have upheld them in ſo great combats, when Sathan had almoſt catched them. And indeed it is to be wondred, how much a little grace will prevail with God for acceptance, and over our enemies for victory, if the heart be upright. Such is the goodneſs of our ſweet Saviour, that he delighteth ſtill to ſhew his ſtrength in our weakneſs.

Firſt therefore for the great conſolation of poor and weak Chriſtians, let them know, that a ſparke from Heaven, though kindled under greene *Uſe* 1

wood

2.22. wood that ſobs and ſmokes, yet it will conſume all at laſt, *Love*
Cant.8.6. once kindled is *ſtrong as death, much water cannot quench it*, and therefore it is called *a vehement flame*, or *flame of God*, kindled in the heart by the Holy Ghoſt: That little that is in us, is fed with an everlaſting
Kings ſpring. As the *fire* that came
3.38 down from heaven in *Elias* his time, licked up all the *water*, to ſhew that it came from God: ſo will this *fire* ſpend all our corruptions, no affliction without, or corruption within ſhall quench it. In the morning we ſee oft clouds gather about the Sun, as if they would hide it, but the Sun waſteth them by little and little, till it comes to its full ſtrength. At the firſt, fears and doubts hinder the breaking out of this fire, until at length it gets above thē all, & Chriſt prevails; and then he backs his

his own graces in us. Grace conquers us firſt, and we by it conquer all things elſe; whether it be corruptions within us, or temptations without us. Ca. 22.

The Church of Chriſt begotten by the word of truth, hath the doctrine of the Apoſtles for her crown, & tramples the Moon, that is, the world, and all worldly things under her feet; *Every one that is borne of God overcometh the world.* Faith, whereby eſpecially Chriſt rules, ſets the ſoul ſo high, that it overlooks all other things as far below, as having repreſented to it, by the Spirit of Chriſt, riches, honour, beauty, pleaſures of an higher nature. Rev. 12. 1. 1 Joh. 5. 4.

Now that we may not come ſhort of the comfort intended, there are two things eſpecially to be taken notice of by us; 1. whether there be ſuch a judgement or government ſet up in us,

to

Ca. 22. to which this promise of victory is made. 2. Some rules or directions how we are to carry our selves, that the judgement of Christ in us may indeed be victorious.

Triall to know whether this judgment in us is such as will be victorious.

The evidences whereby we may come to know that Christs judgement in us is such as will be victorious, are, 1. If we be able from experience to justifie all *Christs* waies, let flesh and blood say what it can to the contrary, and can willingly subscribe to that course which God hath taken in Christ, to bring us to heaven, and still approve a further measure of grace then we have attained unto, and project and fore-cast for it. No other men can justifie their courses, when their conscience is awaked.

1.

2. 2. When reasons of Religion be the strongest reasons with us, and prevaile more than reasons fetcht from

from worldly policy. 3. When we are ſo true to our ends and faſt to our rule, as no hopes or feares can ſway us another way, but ſtill we are looking what agrees or differs from our rule. 4. When we *can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*; as being dearer to us then our lives; truth hath not this ſoveraignty in the heart of any carnall man. 5. When if we had liberty to chooſe under whoſe government we would live, yet out of a delight in the inner man to Chriſts government, we would make choiſe of him onely to rule us before any other, for this argues, that we are like minded to Chriſt, a free and *a voluntary people*, and not compelled unto Chriſts ſervice, otherwiſe then by the ſweet conſtraint of love. When we are ſo far in liking with the government of Chriſts

Ca. 2. 3. 4. 2 Cor. 13. 8. 5.

Spirit,

22. Spirit, that we are willing to reſign up our ſelves to him in all things, for then his kingdome is come into us, when our wills are brought to his will; it is the bent of our wills that maketh us good or ill.

6. 6. A well ordered uniforme life, not by fits or ſtarts, ſhews a a well ordered heart, as in a clock when the hammer ſtrikes well, and the hand of the Dyal points well, it is a ſign that the wheels

7. are right ſet. 7. When Chriſts wil cometh in competition with any earthly loſſe or gain, yet if then in that particular caſe the heart will ſtoop to Chriſt, it is a true ſigne; for the trueſt triall of the power of grace is in ſuch particular caſes which touch us neereſt, for there our corruption maketh the greateſt head. When Chriſt came neer home to the

11.10. *young man* in the Goſpel, he loſt

a

a diſciple of him. 8. When we can practiſe duties pleaſing to Chriſt, though contrary to fleſh, and the courſe of the world. And when we can overcome our ſelves in that evil to which our nature is prone, and ſtandeth ſo much inclined unto, and which agreeth to the ſway of the times, and which others lie inthralled under; as deſire of revenge, hatred of enemies, private ends, &c. then it appears that grace is in us above nature, heaven above earth, and will have the victory. Ca. 22. 8.

For the further clearing of this, and helping of us in our triall, we muſt know there be three degrees of victory. 1. When we reſiſt though we be foiled. 2. When Grace gets the better though with conflict. 3. When all corruption is perfectly ſubdued. Now when we have ſtrength but onely to reſiſt, yet we may know Degrees of victory. 1. 2. 3.

Chriſts

Ca. 23. Christs government in us will be victorious, because what is said of the *Devil*, is said of all our spirituall enemies, *If we resist*, Jam. 4. 7. *they shall* in time *fly from us*: because 1 Joh. 4. 4. *stronger is he that is in us*, that taketh part with his own Grace, *than he that is in the world.* And if we may hope for victory upon bare resistance, what may we not hope for when the Spirit hath gotten the upper hand?

CHAP. XXIII.

Meanes to make grace victorious.

For the second, that is, directions.

Directions how to make our judgments victorious.

We must know, though Christ hath undertaken this victory, yet he accomplisheth it by training us up to fight his battells; he overcommeth in us, by making us *wise to salvation:*

2 Tim. 3. 15.

vation: and in what degree we believe Chriſt will conquer, in that degree we will endeavour by his grace that we may conquer, for Faith is an obedient and a wiſe grace: Chriſt maketh us wiſe to ponder and weigh things, and thereupon to rank and order them ſo as we may make the fitter choice of what is beſt. Some rules to help us in judging are theſe. Ca. 23.

Rules whereby we may better judge.

To judge of things as they help or hinder the main: as they further or hinder our reckoning: as 1.
they make us more or leſſe ſpirituall, and ſo bring us neerer 2.
to the fountain of goodneſs, God 3.
himſelf: as they bring us peace or 4.
ſorrow at the laſt, as they commend us more or leſſe to God, 5.
and wherein we ſhall approve our ſelves to him moſt: Likewiſe
to judge of things now, as we 6.
ſhall doe hereafter when the ſoul

Ca. 23. ſoul ſhall be beſt able to judge, as when we are under any publick calamity, or at the houre of death, when the ſoul gathereth it ſelf from all other things
7. to it ſelf. Look back to former experience, ſee what is moſt agreeable unto it; what was beſt in our worſt times. If Grace is or was beſt then, it is beſt now.
8. And labour to judge of things as as he doth who muſt judge us, and as holy men judge, who are
9. led by the Spirit; more particularly, what thoſe judge, that have no intereſt in any benefit that may come by the thing which is in queſtion: for outward things blinde the eies even of the wiſe: we ſee Papiſts are moſt corrupt in thoſe things, where their honour, eaſe or profit is engaged, but in the doctrine of the Trinity, which doth not touch upon theſe things, they are ſound.

ſound. But it is not ſufficient that judgement be right, but likewiſe ready and ſtrong. Ca. 23.

Where Chriſt eſtabliſheth his government, he inſpireth care to keep the judgement clear and freſh, for whileſt the judgement ſtandeth ſtraight and firme, the whole frame of the ſoul continueth ſtrong and impregnable. True judgement in us advanceth Chriſt, and Chriſt will advance it. All ſin is either from falſe *principles*, or ignorance, or mindleſneſſe, or unbelief of true. By inconſideration and weakneſſe of aſſent, *Eve* loſt her hold at firſt. It is good therefore to ſtore up true principles in our hearts, and to refreſh them often, that in vertue of them our affections and actions may be more vigorous. When judgement is fortified, evil findes no entrance, but good things have a ſide within us, to

Further directions for judgement. 1.

Gen. 3.

Ca.23. to entertain them. Whilſt true convincing light continueth, we will not do the leaſt ill of ſin, for the greateſt ill of puniſhment. *In*
Pro.1.17. *vain is the net ſpred in the eyes of that which hath wings.* Whileſt the ſoul is kept aloft, there is little danger of ſnares below; we loſe our high eſtimation of things, before we can be drawn to any ſin.

And becauſe knowledge and affection mutually help one another, it is good to keep up our affections of *love* and *delight*, by all ſweet inducements and divine encouragements; for what the heart liketh beſt, the mind ſtudieth moſt. Thoſe that can bring their hearts to delight in Chriſt know moſt of his waies. *Wiſedome loveth him that loves her.* Love is the beſt entertainer of truth, and when it is not *enter-*
2 Theſ.2. 10. *tained in the love of it*, (being ſo lovely

lovely as it is) it leaveth the Ca. 23.
heart, and will ſtay no longer. It hath been a prevailing way to begin by withdrawing the love, to corrupt the judgement; becauſe as we love, ſo we uſe to judge: and therefore it is hard to be affectionate and wiſe in earthly things; but in heavenly things, where there hath been a right information of the judgement before, the more our affections grow, the better and clearer our judgements will be, becauſe our affections though ſtrong can never riſe high enough to the excellencie of the things. We ſee in the *Martyrs*, when the ſweet doctrine of Chriſt had once gotten their hearts, it could not be gotten out again by all the torments the wit of cruelty could deviſe. If Chriſt hath once poſſeſſed the affections, there is no diſpoſſeſſing of him again. A fire

in

Ca. 23. in the heart overcometh all fires without.

3. 3 Wiſedom likewiſe teacheth us wherein our weakneſs lyeth, and our enemies ſtrength whereby a jealous fear is ſtirred up in us, whereby we are preſerved: For out of this godly jealouſy, we keep thoſe provocations which are active and working, from that which is paſſive and catching in us, as we keep fire from powder. They that will hinder the generation of noiſome creatures, will hinder the conception firſt, by keeping male and female aſunder. This jealouſy will be much furthered by obſerving ſtrictly what hath helped or hindred a gracious temper in us: and it will make us take heed that we conſult not with fleſh & blood in our ſelves or others. How elſe can we think that Chriſt will lead us out to victory, when

when we take counſell of his and our enemies. Ca. 23.

4. Chriſt maketh us likewiſe carefull to attend all means, whereby freſh thoughts and affections may be ſtirred up and preſerved in us; Chriſt ſo honoureth the uſe of means, and the care he putteth into us, that he aſcribeth both preſervation and victory unto our care of keeping our ſelves. *He that is begotten of God, keepeth himſelf*; but not by himſelf, but by the Lord, in dependance on him on the uſe of means. We are no longer ſafe, then wiſe to preſent our ſelves to all good advantages of acquaintance, &c. By going out of Gods walkes we go out of his government, and ſo loſe our frame, and finde our ſelves over-ſpred quickly with a contrary diſpoſition. When we *draw neare to Chriſt* in his ordinances, 4. 1 Joh. 5. 18. Jam. 4. 8.

Ca. 23. *he drawes neere unto us.*

5. 5. Keep grace in exerciſe: it is not ſleepy habits, but Grace in exerciſe that preſerveth us. Whileſt the ſoul is in ſome civil or ſacred imploy ment, corruptions within us are much ſuppreſſed, and Satans paſſages ſtopped, and the Spirit hath a way open to enlarge it ſelf in us, and likewiſe the guard of *Angels* then moſt neerly attends us; which courſe often prevailes more againſt our ſpirituall enemies then direct oppoſition. It ſtands upon Chriſts honour to maintain thoſe that are in his work.

6. Sixthly, in all directions we muſt look up to Chriſt the quickning Spirit, and reſolve in his ſtrength: though we are exhorted *to cleave to the Lord with full purpoſe of heart*, yet we muſt pray with *David*, *Lord for ever keep it in the thoughts of our hearts*, and

Act. 11. 23.

1 Chro. 29. 18.

and prepare our hearts unto thee: Ca. 2.
our hearts are of themselves very
loose and unsetled, *Lord unite* Ps. 86.11.
our hearts unto thee to fear thy name; or else without him our best purposes will fall to the ground. It is a pleasing request, out of love to God to beg such a frame of soul from him, wherein he may take delight; & therefore in the use of all the means, we must send up our desires and complaints to heaven, to him for strength and help, and then we may be sure that *he will bring forth judgement unto victory.*

Lastly, it furthers the state of 7.
the soul, to know what frame it should be in, that so we may order our soules accordingly; we should alwaies be fit for communion with God, and be heavenly-minded in earthly business, and be willing to be taken off from them, to redeem time for better

Ca. 23. things; we ſhould be ready at all times to depart hence, and to live in ſuch a condition as we would be content to die in: we ſhould have hearts prepared for every good duty, open to all good occaſions, and ſhut to all temptations, keeping our watch, and being alwaies ready armed; ſo farre as we come ſhort of theſe things, ſo far we have juſt cauſe to be humbled, and yet preſſe forward that we may gain more upon our ſelves, and make theſe things more familiar and lovely unto us; and when we find our ſoules any waies falling downwards, it is beſt to raiſe them up preſently by ſome waking meditations; as of the preſence of God, of the ſtrict reckoning we are to make, of the infinite love of God in Chriſt, and the fruits of it, of the excellency of a Chriſtians calling, of the

ſhort

ſhort and uncertain time of this life: how little good all thoſe things that ſteal away our hearts, will do us ere long; and how it ſhall be for ever with us thereafter as we ſpend this little time well or ill, &c. the more we give way for ſuch conſiderations to ſink into our hearts, the more we ſhall riſe nearer to that ſtate of ſoul, which we ſhall enjoy in heaven. When we grow regardleſſe of keeping our ſoules then God recovers our taſte of good things againe by ſharpe croſſes; thus *David*, *Solomon*, *Sampſon*, &c. were recovered: it is much eaſier kept then recovered. Ca. 23.

But notwithſtanding my ſtriving, I ſeeme to ſtand at a ſtay. *Ob.*

Grace (as the ſeed in the Parable) growes we know not how, yet at length when *Anſ.* 1.

Ca. 23. God seeth fittest, we shall see that all our endeavour hath not been in vain; the tree falleth upon the last stroke, yet all the former strokes help it forward.

Ans. 2. Judg. 20. 26. Sometimes victory is suspended, because some *Achan* is not found out; or because we are not humble enough, as *Israel* had the worst against the *Benjamites* till they fasted and prayed; or because we betray our helps, and stand not upon our guard, and yeeld not presently to the motions of the Spirit, which mindeth us alwaies of the best things, if we would regard it. Our own consciences will tell us, if we give them leave to speak, that some sinfull favouring of our selves is the cause. The way in this case to prevaile, is 1. to get the victory over the pride of our own nature, by taking shame to our selves,

ſelves, in humble confeſſion to God; and then 2. to overcome the unbelief of our hearts, by yielding to the *promiſe* of pardon; and then 3. in confidence of Chriſts aſſiſtance to ſet our ſelves againſt thoſe ſins which have prevailed over us; and then prevailing over our ſelves, we ſhall eaſily prevail over all our enemies, and conquer all conditions we ſhall be brought into. Ca. 24.

CHAP. XXIV.

All ſhould ſide with Chriſt.

IF Chriſt will have the victory, then it is the beſt way for Nations and States to *kiſſe the Son*, and to embrace Chriſt and his religion, to ſide with Chriſt, and to own his cauſe in the world, his *Uſe* 2. Pſal. 2.

Ca. 24. ſide will prove the ſtronger ſide at laſt; happy are we if Chriſt honour us ſo much, as to uſe our help *to fight his battell againſt the mighty*. True Religion in a State, is as the maine pillar of an houſe, and ſtaffe of a tent that upholds all: 2. ſo for *families*, let Chriſt be the chief Governour of the family: and 3. let every one be as an houſe of Chriſt to dwell familiarly in, and to rule; where Chriſt is, all happineſſe muſt follow. If Chriſt goeth, all will go; where Chriſts government in his ordinances and his Spirit is, there all ſubordinate government wil proſper: Religion inſpireth life and grace into all other *vertues*, without it they are but as a fair picture without an head. Where Chriſts Lawes are written in the heart, there all other good Laws are beſt obeyed; None deſpiſe mans law but thoſe

Judg. 5. 23.

that

that deſpiſe Chriſts firſt. Of all perſons a man guided by Chriſt is the beſt; and of all creatures in the world, a man guided by wil and affection (next the devil) is the worſt. The happineſſe of weaker things ſtands in being ruled by ſtronger: it is beſt for a blind man to be guided by him that hath ſight; it is beſt for ſheep, and ſuch like ſhiftleſſe creatures to be guided by man; and it is happieſt for man to be guided by Chriſt, becauſe his government is ſo victorious, that it frees us from the feare and danger of our greateſt enemies, and tends to bring us to the greateſt happineſſe that our nature is capable of. This ſhould make us to joy when Chriſt reigneth in us. When *Solomon was crowned the people ſhouted*, ſo that the *earth rang*; much more ſhould we rejoyce in Chriſt our King. Ca. 24.

Nemo humanam auctoritatem contemnit, niſi qui divinam priùs contempſit.

Ca.24. And likewise for those whose souls are dear unto us, our endeavour should be that Christ may reign in them also; that they may be *baptized* by Christ with *fire*, that these sparks may be kindled
Mat.3.11. in them. Men labour to cherish the spirit and metal (as they terme it) of those they train up, because they think they wil have use of it in the manifold affaires and troubles of this life. Oh, but let us cherish the sparks of grace in them: for a natural Spirit in great troubles will fail, but these sparkes will make them conquerours over the greatest evils.

Use 3. If Christs judgement shall be victorious, then Popery being an oppoſite frame, set up by the wit of man, to maintain stately idlenesse, must fall. And it is falne already in the hearts of those upon whom Christ hath shi-

shined. It is a lye, and founded upon a lye, upon the infallible judgement of a man subject to sin and errour. When that which is taken for a principle of truth, becomes a principle of error, the more relying upon it, the more danger. Ca. 25.

CHAP. XXV.

Christs government shall be openly victorious.

IT is not onely said, *judgement* shall be victorious, but that Christ will *bring* it openly forth to victory. Whence we observe, that Grace shall be glory, and run into the eyes of all. Now Christ doth conquer, and hath his own ends, but it is in some sort invisibly: his enemies within and without us seem to have the better 4 Conclusion.

Ca. 25. ter. But he will *bring forth judgment unto victory*, to the veiw of all. The wicked that now shut their eyes, shall see it to their torment. It shall not be in the power of subtill men, to see or not see what they would; Christ will have power over their hearts, and as his wrath shall immediatly seise upon their sôuls against their wills, so will he have power over the eyes of their souls, to see and know what will increase their misery; Grief shall be fastned to all their senses, and their senses to grief.

Then all the false glosses which they put upon things shall be wiped off. Men are desirous to have the reputation of good, and yet the sweetnesse of ill; nothing so cordially opposed by them, as that truth which layeth them open to themselves, and to the eyes of others; their chief

chief care being how to daube Ca. 25.
with the world and their own conſciences. But the time will come when they ſhall be driven out of this fools Paradiſe, and the more ſubtill their conveiance of things hath been, the more ſhall be their ſhame. Chriſt whom God hath choſen to ſet forth the chief glory of his excellencies, is now veiled in regard of his body the Church, but will come ere long to be *glorious in his Saints*; and not loſe the clear manifeſtation of any of his attributes, and will declare to all the wotld what *he is*, when there ſhall be no glory but that of Chriſt and his Spouſe. Thoſe that are as *ſmoking Flax* now ſhall then *ſhine as the Sun in the firmament*, and their *righteouſneſſe break forth as the noon day*. 2 Theſ. 1. 10. Mat. 13. 43. Pſ. 37. 6.

The Image of God in *Adam* had

,25. had a commanding majestie in it, so that all creatures reverenced him; much more shall the Image of God in the perfection of it, command respect in all. Even now there is a secret awe put into the hearts of the greatest, towards those in whom they see any grace to shine, from whence it was that *Herod feared John Baptist*; but what will this be in their day of bringing forth, which
om 8.19 is called *the day of the revelation of the sons of God?*

There will be more glorious
ev.11. times when *the Kingdoms of the*
o. *earth shall be the Lord Jesus Christs*; and he shal for ever reign; then shall judgement and truth have its victory: Then Christ will plead his own cause, truth shall no longer be called heresie, and schisme, nor heresie Catholick doctrine; wickednesse shall no longer go masqued and dis-

guised,

guiſed, goodneſſe ſhall appear in its own luſtre, and ſhine in its own beames, things ſhall be what they are; *nothing is hidden but ſhall be laid open.* Iniquity ſhall not be carried in a myſterie any longer. Deep diſſemblers that think to hide their counſells from the Lord, ſhall walke no longer inviſible as in the clouds. As Chriſt will not quench the leaſt ſpark kindled by himſelf, ſo will he damp the faireſt blaze of goodly appearances which are not from above. Ca. 2. Mat. 10. 26.

If this were believed, men would make more account of ſincerity, wch wil only give us boldneſſe, and not ſeek for covershames; the confidence whereof, as it maketh men now more preſumptuous, ſo it wil expoſe them hereafter to the greater ſhame. *Uſe.*

If judgement ſhall be brought forth to victory, then thoſe that have

Ca. 25. have been ruled by their own deceitfull hearts, and a ſpirit of errour, ſhall be brought forth to diſgrace. That God that hath joyned grace and truth with honour, hath joyned ſin and ſhame together at laſt; all the wit and power of man can never be able to *ſever what God hath coupled.* Truth and piety may be trampled upon
Rev. 11. for a time, but as the *two witneſſes* after they were ſlain, roſe again, and ſtood upon their feet; ſo whatſoever is of God, ſhall at length ſtand upon its own bottom. There ſhal be a reſurrection not only of bodies but of credits. Can we think he that threw the Angels out of heaven, wil ſuffer duſt and wormes meat to runne a contrary courſe, and to carry it away alwayes ſo? No, as veri-
Rev. 19. ly as Chriſt is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, ſo wil he *daſh all thoſe* peeces of earth *which riſe up againſt*

gainſt him, as a potters veſſell. Was there ever any fierce againſt God and proſpered? No doubtleſſe, the rage of man ſhall turn to Chriſts praiſe. What was ſaid of *Pharaoh*, ſhall be ſaid of all heady enemies, who had rather loſe their ſouls then their wills, that they are but raiſed up for Chriſt to get himſelf glory in their confuſion. Ca. 25. Pſal. 2. 9. Job. 9 4. Pſ. 76. 10.

Let us then take heed that we follow not the wayes of thoſe men, whoſe ends we ſhal tremble at: There is not a more fearfull judgement can befall the nature of man, then to be given up to a reprobate judgement of perſons and things, becauſe it cometh under a *woe*, *to call ill good, and good ill.* Eſay 5. 20

How will they be laden with curſes another day, that abuſe the judgement of others by Sophiſtry, and flattery, *deceivers, and being deceived:* Then the

Ca. 25. the complaine of our first mother
Gen. 13. 3. *Eve* will be taken up, but fruitlesly; The serpent hath deceived me; Sathan in such and such hath deceived me; Sin hath deceived me; a fooliſh heart hath deceived me. It is one of the higheſt points of wiſdome, to conſider upon what grounds we venture our ſoules. Happy men will they be, who have by Chriſts light, a right judgement of things, and ſuffer that judgement to prevaile over their hearts.

The ſoul of moſt men is drowned in their ſenſes, and carried away with weak opinions, raiſed from vulgar miſtakes and ſhadowes of things. And Satan is ready to enlarge the imagination of outward good, and outward ill, and make it greater then it is, and ſpirituall things leſſe, preſenting them through falſe glaſſes. And ſo men truſting

ing

ing in vanity, vanquish themselves in their own apprehensions. A woful condition, when both we and that which we highly esteem shall vanish together, which will be as truly as Christs judgement shall come to victory; and in what measure the vain heart of man hath been enlarged, to conceive a greater good in things of this world then there is, by so much the soul shall be enlarged to be more sensible of misery when it sees its errour. This is the difference betwixt a godly wise man, and a deluded worldling; that which the one doth now judge to be vain, the other shal hereafter feel to be so, when it is too late. But this is the vanity of our natures, that though we shunne above all things, to be deceived and mistaken in present things; yet in the greatest matters of all we are willingly Ca. 25.

Ca. 26. ly ignorant and misled.

Chap. XXVI.

Christ alone advanceth this government.

5 Conclusion. THe fifth conclusion is, That this government is set up & advanced by Christ alone; He bringeth judgement to victory. We both fight and prevaile *in* Eph. 6 10. *the power of his might*; we overcome by the spirit obtained *by* Rev. 12. 11. *the blood of the Lambe.*

It is *he* alone that *teacheth our* Psal. 14. 1. *hands to war, and fingers to fight.* Nature (as corrupted) favours its own being, and will maintain it self against Christs government. Nature (simply considered) cannot raise it self above it self to actions spiritual of a higher order and nature; therefore the divine power of Christ is necessary to carry

carry us above all our own ſtrength, eſpecially in duties wherein we meet with greater oppoſition; for there not onely nature wil fail us, but ordinary grace, unleſſe there be a ſtronger and a new ſupply. In taking up a burthen that is weightier then ordinary, if there be not a greater proportion of ſtrength then weight, the undertaker wil lie under it: So to every ſtrong encounter, there muſt be a new ſupply of ſtrength; as in *Peter* when he was aſſaulted with a ſtronger temptation, being not upheld and ſhored up with a mightier hand, notwithſtanding former ſtrength, foully fell. And being fallen, in our raiſings up again it is Chriſt that muſt do the worke, 1. by removing; or 2. weakning; or 3. ſuſpending oppoſite hinderances; 4 and by advancing the power of his grace in us, to a further

Ca. 26. Math. 26. 69.

Ca. 26. further degree then we had before we fell; therefore when we are fallen, and by falls have gotten a bruiſe, let us go to Chriſt preſently to binde us up again.

Let us know therefore that it is dangerous to look for that frō our ſelves which we muſt have from Chriſt. Since the fall, all our ſtrength lies in him as *Sampſons in his hair*; we are but ſubordinate agents moving as we are moved, and working as we are firſt wrought upon, free ſo far forth as we are freed, no wiſer nor ſtronger then he makes us to be for the preſent in any thing we undertake. It is his Spirit that actuates, and enliveneth, and applieth that knowledge and ſtrength we have, or elſe it faileth and lyeth as uſeleſſe in us; we work when we work upon a preſent ſtrength; therefore dependant ſpirits are the wiſeſt and the

Judg. 16. 17.

Sic ſe habent mortalium corda; quæ ſcimus, cum neceſſ: non eſt, in neceſſitate neſcimus. Ber. de conſid.

the ableſt. Nothing is ſtronger then humility, that goeth out of it ſelf; or weaker then pride that reſteth upon its own bottome: and this ſhould the rather be obſerved, becauſe naturally we affect a kinde of Divinity, in ſetting upon actions in the ſtrength of our own parts; whereas Chriſt ſaith, *Without me you*, Apoſtles that are in ſtate of grace, *can do nothing*: he doth not ſay, You can do a little, but nothing: of our ſelves, how eaſily are we overcome? how weake to reſiſt? we are as Reeds ſhaken with every winde, we ſhake at the very noiſe and thought of poverty, diſgrace, loſſes, &c. we give in preſently, we have no power over our eyes, tongues, thoughts, affections, but let ſin paſſe in and out. How ſoon are we overcome of evil? whereas we ſhould overcome evil with good.

Ca. 26.

Fruſtra nititur qui non innititur.

Affectatio divinitatis.

Joh. 15. 5.

Ca.26. good. How many good purpoſes ſtick in the birth, and have no ſtrength to come forth? All which ſhews how nothing we are without the Spirit of Chriſt. We ſee how weak the Apoſtles themſelves were, till they were indued with ſtrength from above: Math. 26 69. *Peter* was blaſted with the ſpeech of a *Damſell* but after the Spirit of Chriſt fell upon them, the more they ſuffered, the more they were encouraged to ſuffer: their comforts grew with their troubles; therefore in all, eſpecially difficult encounters) let us lift up our hearts to Chriſt, who hath Spirit enough for us all, in all our exigences; and ſay with good *Jehoſaphat*, *Lord, we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee*: the battell we fight is thine, and the ſtrength whereby we fight muſt be *thine*. If thou goeſt not out with us, we are ſure 2 Chron. 20.21.

to

to be foiled. Sathan knows nothing can prevail againſt Chriſt, or thoſe that relye upon his power; therefore his ſtudy is, how to keep us in our ſelves, and in the creature: but we muſt carry this alwayes in our mindes, that that which is begun in ſelf-confidence, will end in ſhame. Ca. 26.

The manner of Chriſts *bringing forth judgment to victory*, is by letting us ſee a neceſſity of dependance upon him: hence proceed thoſe ſpirituall deſertions wherein he often leaveth us to our ſelves, both in regard of grace and comfort, that we may know the ſpring-head of theſe to be out of our ſelves. Hence it is that *in the mount*, that is, in extremities, *God is moſt ſeen*. Hence it is that we are ſaved by the grace of faith, that carrieth us out of our ſelves to relye upon another; and that faith worketh beſt alone, when

How Chriſt bringeth forth judgment to victory.

1.

2.

3. Gen. 22. 13.

Ca. 26. when it hath leaſt outward ſup-
4. port. Hence it is that we often fail in leſſer conflicts, and ſtand out in greater, becauſe in leſſer we reſt more in our ſelves, in greater we flye *to the rock of our ſalvation which is higher then we.*
5. Hence likewiſe it is, that we are ſtronger after foyls, becauſe hidden corruption undiſcern'd befor, is now diſcovered, and thence we are brought to make uſe of mercy pardoning, and power ſupporting. One main ground of this diſpenſation, is that we ſhould know it is Chriſt that giveth both the will and the deed, and that as a voluntary work according to his own good pleaſure. And therefore we ſhould *work out our*
Phil. 2. 12. *ſalvation in a* jealous *fear and trembling*, leſt by unreverent and preſumptuous walking, we give him cauſe to ſuſpend his gracious influence, and to leave us to the

the darkneſſe of our own heart. Ca. 26.

Thoſe that are under Chriſts government have the ſpirit of Revelation, whereby they ſee and feel a divine power ſweetly and ſtrongly enabling them for to preſerve faith, when they feel the contrary, and hope in a ſtate hopeleſſe, and love to God under ſignes of his diſpleaſure, and heavenly-mindedneſſe in the midſt of worldly affairs and allurements drawing a contrary way: they feel a power preſerving patience, nay joy in the midſt of cauſes of mourning, inward peace in the midſt of aſſaults. Whence is it that when we are aſſaulted with temptation, and when compaſſed with troubles, we have ſtood out, but from a ſecret ſtrength upholding us? To make ſo little grace ſo victorious over ſo great a maſſe of corruption, this requireth a ſpirit more then humane;

Ca. 26. this is as to preſerve fire in the Sea, and a part of heaven even as it were in hell. Here we know where to have this power, and to whom to return the praiſe of it. And it is our happineſs, that it is ſo ſafely hid in Chriſt for us, in one ſo neer unto God and us. Since the fall, God wil not truſt us with our own ſalvation, but it is both purchaſed and kept by Chriſt for us, & we for *it* through faith, wrought by the power of God, and laying hold of the ſame: which power is *glorioufly* ſet forth by *Saint Paul*, 1. to be *a great power*; 2. *an exceeding power*; 3. *a working and a mighty power*; 4. *ſuch a power as was wrought in raiſing Chriſt from the dead.* That grace which is but a perſwaſive offer, and in our pleaſure to receive or refuſe, is not that grace which brings us to heaven; but Gods people feel a powerfull work

Ephes. 1. 19.

work of the *Spirit*, not onely revealing unto us our miſery, and deliverance through Chriſt, but emptying us of our ſelves, as being redeemed from our ſelves, and infuſing new life into us, and after ſtrengthning us, and quickning of us when we droop and hang the wing, and never leaving us till perfect conqueſt. Ca. 27

CHAP. XXVII.

Victory not to be had without fighting.

THe ſixt concluſion is, that this prevailing government ſhall not be without fighting; There can be no victory where there is no combat; In *Eſay* it is ſaid, *He ſhall bring judgment in truth*; here it is ſaid, *he ſhall ſend forth judgment unto victory*. The word *ſend forth* hath a ſtronger 6 Concluſion. Eſay 42. 3.

Ca. 27. ſenſe in the originall, *to ſend forth with force*; to ſhew, that *where his government is in truth, it will be oppoſed, untill he getteth the upper hand.* Nothing is ſo oppoſed, as Chriſt and his government, both within us, and without us. And within us moſt in our firſt converſion, though corruption prevails not ſo far as to make void the powerfull work of grace, yet there is not onely a poſſibility of oppoſing, but a proneneſs to oppoſe, and not onely a proneneſs, but an actuall withſtanding the working of Chriſts Spirit, and that in every action, but yet no prevailing reſiſtance, ſo far as to make void the work of grace, but corruption in the iſſue yeelds to grace.

There is much adoe to bring Chriſt into the heart, and to ſet a Tribunal for him to judge there, there is an army of luſts mutiny

mutiny againſt him. The utmoſt ſtrength of moſt mens endeavors and parts, is to keep Chriſt from ruling in the ſoul, the fleſh ſtil laboureth to maintain its own regency, and therefore it cries down the credit of whatſoever croſſeth it, as Gods bleſſed ordinances, &c. and highly prizeth any thing though never ſo dead and empty, if it give way to the liberty of the fleſh. Ca. 27.

And no marvel if the ſpiritual government of Chriſt be ſo oppoſed; 1. becauſe it is government, and that limits the courſe of the will, and caſteth a bridle upon its wanderings; every thing naturall reſiſts what oppoſeth it; ſo corrupt will labours to bear down all laws, and counteth it a generous thing not to be awed, and an argument of a low ſpirit to fear any, even God himſelf, untill unavoidable danger ſeizeth Reaſons why Chriſts government is oppoſed. 1.

Ca. 27. on men, and then thoſe that fea-
red leaſt out of danger, fear moſt
Dan. 5.6. in danger, as we ſee in *Balthazar.*

2. It is ſpirituall government, & therefore the leſs wil fleſh endure it: Chriſts governmēt bringeththe very thoughts and deſires wch are the moſt immediate and free iſſue of the ſoul, into obedience; though a man were of ſo compoſed a carriage, that his whole life were free frō outward offenſive breaches, yet wth *Chriſt,* to be *carnally or worldly minded, is death;* he looketh on a worldly mind with a greater deteſtation then any one particular offence.

Rom. 8.6. *Gravius eſt peccatum diligere, quam pertrare, &c. Gregor. Moral. l. 5. c. 11.*

But Chriſts Spirit is in thoſe who are in ſome degree earthly minded.

Ob. Truth it is, but not as an allower and maintainer, but as an oppoſer, ſubduer, and in the end as a Conquerour: Carnall men would fain bring Chirſt and the fleſh together,

Anſ.

ther, and could be content with ſome reſervation to ſubmit to Chriſt; but Chriſt will be no underling to any baſe affection; and therefore where there is allowance of our ſelves in any ſinfull luſt, it is a ſigne the Keyes were never given up to Chriſt to rule us. Ca. 27.

3. Again, this *judgement* is oppoſed, becauſe it is judgement, and men love not to be judged and cenſured. Now Chriſt in his truth arraigneth thē, giveth ſentence againſt them, and bindeth them over to the latter judgment of the great day. And therefore they take upon them to judge that truth that muſt judge them, but truth will be too good for them; Man hath a day now, which S. *Paul* calls *mans day*, wherein he getteth upon his bench, and uſurpeth a judgement over Chriſt and his wayes; but God hath a day, wherein he will 3. 1 Cor. 4. 3.

Ca. 27. ſet all ſtraight, and his judgment ſhall ſtand. And the Saints ſhall have their time, when they ſhall
1 Cor. 6. 2. ſit in judgment upon them that
Pſal. 110. judge them now. In the meane time Chriſt will rule in the midſt of his enemies, even in the midſt of our hearts.

Uſe. It is therefore no ſigne of a good condition, to finde all quiet and nothing at odds: For can we think that corruption which is the elder in us, and Sathan the ſtrong man, that keepeth many holds in us, will yeeld poſſeſſion quietly? No, there is not ſo much as a thought of goodneſſe diſcovered by him, but he joyneth with corruption to kill it in the birth. And as *Pharaohs* cruelty was eſpecially againſt the male children; ſo Sathans malice is eſpecially againſt the moſt religious and manly reſolutions.

This then we are alwaies to expect,

expect, that whereſoever Chriſt Ca. 27
commeth, there will be oppoſition: when Chriſt was borne, all *Jeruſalem* was troubled; ſo when Chriſt is borne in any man, the ſoul is in an uproar, and all becauſe the heart is unwilling to yeeld up it ſelf to Chriſt to rule it.

Whereſoever Chriſt cometh, he breedeth diviſion, not onely 1. between man and himſelf; but 1
2. between man and man; and 3. between Church and Church: Of which diſturbance Chriſt is no more the cauſe, then Phyſick is of trouble in a diſtempered body, of which noyſome humours are the proper cauſe: for the end of Phyſick is the peace of humours. But Chriſt thinketh it fit that the thoughts of mens hearts ſhould be diſcovered, and he is as well for the *falling* as the *riſing of many in Iſrael*. Luk. 2. 34.

Thus the deſperate madneſſe of

Ca. 27. of men is laid open, that they had rather be under the guidance of their own lusts, and by consequence of Satan himself, to their endlesse destruction, then put their feet into Christs fetters, and their necks under his yoak; whereas indeed Christs service is the onely true liberty, his yoak is an easie yoak, his burthen but as the burthen of winges to a bird, that maketh her fly the higher. Satans government is rather a bondage then a government, unto which Christ giveth up those that shake off his owne, for then he giveth Satan and his factors power over them, since they will not *receive the truth in love*, take him *Jesuite*, take him Sathan, blind him, and binde him, and lead him to perdition. Those that take the most liberty to sin, are the most perfect slaves, because most voluntary slaves; the will

2 Thes. 2. 10.

will in every thing is either the beſt or the worſt, the furtrer men go on in a wilfull courſe, the deeper they ſink in rebellion; and the more they croſſe Chriſt, doing what they will, the more they ſhall one day ſuffer what they would not. In the mean time they are priſoners in their own ſouls, bound over in their conſciences to the judgment of him after death, whoſe judgment they would none of in their lives. And is it not equall that they ſhould feel him a ſevere Judge to condemne them, whom they would not have a milde Judge to rule them? Ca. 27

CHAP.

Ca.28.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Be encouraged to go on cheerfully, with confidence of prevailing.

FOr conclusion and general application of all that hath been spoken, unto our selves. We see the conflicting, but yet sure and hopefull state of Gods people. The victory lyeth not upon us, but upon Christ, who hath taken upon him as to conquer for us, so to conquer in us. The victory lyeth neither in our own strength to get, nor in our enemies to defeat it. If it lay upon us, we might justly fear. But Christ will maintain his own government in us, and take our part against our
h.6.10. corruptions; they are his enemies as well as ours. *Let us therefore be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; let us not look so much who are our enemies,

mies, as who is our Judge and Captain, nor what they threaten, but what he promiſeth; we have more for us, then againſt us. What coward would not fight, when he is ſure of victory? none are here overcome, but he that will not fight. Therefore when any baſe fainting ſeizeth upon us, let us lay the blame where it is to be layed. Ca. 2

Diſcouragment riſing from unbelief and ill report, brought upō the good Land by the Spies, moved God to ſwear in his wrath, that they ſhould not enter into his reſt. Let us take heed a ſpirit of faint-heartedneſs, riſing from ſeeming difficulty and diſgrace, caſt upon Gods good wayes, provoke not God to keep us out of heaven. We ſee here what we may look for from heaven. O beloved, it is a comfortable thing to conceive of Chriſt aright, Danger of Diſcouragement

a.28. aright, to know what *love, mercy, ſtrength* we have laid up for us in the breaſt of Chriſt. A good conceit of the Phyſician (we ſay) is half the cure; Let us make uſe of this his mercy and power every day, in our dayly combats. Lord Jeſus, thou haſt promiſed not to quench the *ſmoking Flax*, not to break the *bruiſed Reed*; cheriſh thine own grace in me, leave me not to my ſelf, the glory ſhall be thine. Let us not ſuffer Sathan to transforme Chriſt unto us, to be otherwiſe then he is to thoſe that are his. Chriſt will not leave us, till he hath made us like himſelf, *all glorious within and without*, and *preſented us blameleſſe before his Father*. What a comfort is this in our conflicts with our unruly hearts, that it ſhall not alwayes be thus? let us ſtrive a little while, and we ſhall be happy for ever. Let us think when we are trou-

troubled with our ſins, that Ca. 28.
Chriſt hath this in charge of his
Father, *That he ſhall not quench*
the ſmoking Flax, untill he hath
ſubdued all. This putteth a ſhield
into our hands to beat back all *the*
fiery darts of Sathan: he will ob- Epheſ. 6.
ject, thou art a great ſinner; we 16.
may anſwer; Chriſt is a ſtronge 1.
Saviour: but he will object, thou Sathan
haſt no faith, no love; Yes, a foyled.
ſparke of faith and love: but 2.
Chriſt will not regard that; Yes, 3.
he will not quench the ſmoking
Flax: But this is ſo little and
weak, that it will vaniſh & come
to nought: Nay, but Chriſt will
cheriſh it, untill he hath brought 4.
judgment to victory. And thus
much for our comfort, we have
already, that even when we firſt
believed, we overcame God
himſelf (as it were) by believing
the pardon of all our ſins; not-
withſtanding the guilt of our own
conſciences

Ca. 28. ences, and his abſolute juſtice. Now having been prevailers with God, what ſhall ſtand againſt us if we can learne to make uſe of our faith?

O what a confuſion is this to Sathan, that he ſhould labour to blow out a poor ſpark, & yet ſhould not be able to quench it; that a *grain of Muſtard ſeed* ſhould be ſtronger then the gates of *hell*; that it ſhould be able *to remove mountaines of* oppoſitions, and temptations caſt up by Sathan and our rebellious hearts between God & us. *Abimeleck* could not endure that it ſhould be ſaid a *woman had ſlain him*, and it muſt needs be a torment to Sathan, that a weak child, a woman, and decrepit old man ſhould by a ſpirit of faith put him to flight.

Judg. 9. 54.

Since there is ſuch comfort, where there is a little truth of grace, that it will be ſo victorious;

ous; Let us oft try what God hath wrought in us, ſearch our good as well as our ill, and be thankfull to God for the leaſt meaſure of grace, more then for any outward thing; it will be of more uſe and comfort then all this world which paſſeth away and cometh to nothing. Yea, let us be thankfull for that promiſed and aſſured victory, which we may rely on without preſumption, as S. *Paul* doth; *Thanks be to God, that hath given us victorie in Jeſus Chriſt.* See a flame in a ſpark, a Tree in a ſeed; ſee great things in little beginnings; Look not ſo much to the beginning, as to the perfection, and ſo we ſhall be in ſome degree joy full in our ſelves, and thankfull unto Chriſt. Ca. 28. 1 Cor. 15. 57.

Neither muſt we reaſon from a denial of a great meaſure of grace, to a denyal of any at all in us; for faith and grace ſtand not in

Ca. 28. in an indiviſible point, ſo as he that hath not ſuch and ſuch a meaſure hath none at all: But as there is a great breadth between a ſpark and a flame, ſo there is a great wideneſſe between the leaſt meaſure of grace and the greateſt: and he that hath the leaſt meaſure, is within the compaſſe of Gods eternall favour; though he be not a ſhining light, yet he is a ſmoking wiek, which Chriſts tender care will not ſuffer him to quench.

And let all this that hath been ſpoken, allure thoſe that are not yet in ſtate of grace, to come under CHRISTS ſweet and victorious government, for though we ſhall have much oppoſition, yet if we ſtrive, he will help us; if we fail, he will cheriſh us; if we be guided by him, we ſhall overcome; if we *overcome*, we are ſure to be *crowned*. And for the preſent

preſent ſtate of the Church, we Ca. 28.
ſee now how forlorne it is, yet let us comfort our ſelves, that Chriſts cauſe ſhall prevail; *Chriſt* Pſ. 10.11.
will rule, till he hath made his enemies his footſtool, not onely to trample upon, but to help him up to mount higher in glory. *Babylon ſhall fall, for ſtrong is the Lord who hath condemned her*, *Rev.* 18. 8. Chriſts judgment not onely in his children, but alſo againſt his enemies ſhall be victorious, for he is *King of Kings and Lord of Lords.* Rev. 19. 16. God will not alwayes ſuffer Antichriſt and his ſupports to revell and ruffle in the Church as they do.

If we look to the preſent ſtate of the Church of *Chriſt*, it is as *Daniel* in the midſt of Lions, as a Lilly amongſt thornes, as a ſhip not only toſſed, but almoſt covered with waves. It is ſo low, that the enemies think they have buried

Ca. 28. ried Chriſt in regard of his Goſpel, in the grave, and there they think to keep him from riſing, but Chriſt as he roſe in his perſon, ſo he will roll away all ſtones, & riſe again in his Church: how little ſupport hath the Church, and cauſe of Chriſt at this day? how ſtrong a conſpiracy is againſt it? The ſpirit of Antichriſt is now lifted up, and marcheth furiouſly; things ſeem to hang on a ſmall and inviſible thred. But our comfort is, that Chriſt liveth and raigneth, and ſtandeth on *Mount Sion* in defence Rev. 14. 1. of them that ſtand for him; and when States and Kingdomes ſhal daſh one againſt another, Chriſt will have care of his own children and cauſe, ſeeing there is nothing elſe in the world that he much eſteemeth. At this very time the delivery of his Church, and the ruine of his enemies is in working:

ing: we ſee not things in motion till Chriſt hath done his work, and then we ſhall ſee that the Lord reigneth. Ca. 28.

Chriſt and his Church when they are at the loweſt, are neereſt riſing: his enemies at the higheſt are neereſt a downfall.

The *Jews* are not yet come in under Chriſts banner, but God that hath perſwaded *Japhet* to come into the Tents of *Shem*, wil perſwade *Shem* to come into the Tents of *Japhet*. The fulneſſe of the Gentiles is not yet come in, but Chriſt that hath the utmoſt parts of the earth given him for his poſſeſſion, will gather all the ſheep his Father hath given him into one fold, that there may be one *ſheepfold*, and one *ſhepherd*. Gen. 9. 27. Rom. 11. 25. Pſal. 2. 8. Joh. 10. 16.

The faithfull *Jews* rejoyced to think of the calling of the Gentiles: and why ſhould not we joy to think of the calling of the *Jews*? The

Ca.28. The Goſpels courſe hath hitherto been as that of the Sun, from Eaſt to Weſt, and ſo in Gods time may proceed yet further Weſt. No creature can hinder the courſe of the Sun, nor ſtop the influence of heaven, nor hinder the blowing of the winde, much leſſe hinder the prevailing power of *Divine* truth, untill Chriſt hath brought all under one head, and then he will preſent all to his Father; theſe are they thou haſt given unto me; theſe are they that have taken me for their Lord and King, that have ſuffered with me; My will is that they be where I am, and reign with me. And then he will deliver up the Kingdom even to his Father, and put downe all other rule and authority, and power.

1 Cor. 15. 24.

Reſolution needful in a Chriſtian.

Let us then bring our hearts to holy reſolutions, & ſet our ſelves upon that which is good, and againſt

gainſt that which is ill, in our Ca. 28.
ſelves or others, according to our callings, upon this encouragement, that Chriſts grace & power ſhall go along with us. What had become of that great work of reformation of Religion in the latter-ſpring of the Goſpel, if men had not been armed with invincible courage to out-ſtride all lets, upon this faith, that the cauſe was Chriſts, and that he would not be wanting to his own cauſe. *Luther* ingeniouſly confeſſed, that he carried matters often inconſideratly, and with mixture of paſſion; but upon acknowledgment, God took not advantage of his errours, but the cauſe being Gods, and his aymes being holy, to promote the truth, and being a mighty man in prayer, & ſtrong in faith, God by him kindled that fire which all the world ſhal never be able to quench. Accor-

Ca. 28. ding to our faith, ſo is our encouragement to all duties, therefore let us ſtrengthen faith, that it may ſtrengthen all other graces. This very belief, that faith ſhal be victorious, is a means to make it ſo indeed. Believe it therefore, that though it be often as *ſmoking Flax*, yet it ſhall prevail. If it prevail with God himſelf in tryals, ſhall it not prevail over all other oppoſition? *Let us wait a-*
Exo. 14. 13 *while, and we ſhall ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.*

The Lord reveal himſelf more and more unto us in the face of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and magnifie the power of his grace in cheriſhing thoſe beginnings of grace in the midſt of our corruptions, and ſanctifie the conſideration of our own infirmities to humble us, and of his tender mercy to encourage us: And perſwade us, that ſince he hath taken us into the

the covenant of grace, he wil not caſt us off for thoſe corruptions; which as they grieve his Spirit, ſo they make us vile in our own eyes. And becauſe Sathan labours to obſcure the glory of his mercy, and hinder our comfort by diſcouragements, the Lord adde this to the reſt of his mercies, that we may make the right uſe of this grace, and not loſe any portion of comfort that is laid up for us in Chriſt. And he vouchſafe to let the prevailing power of his Spirit in us, be an evidence of the truth of grace begun, and a pledge of finall victory, at that time when he will be all in all, in all his, for all eternity. *Amen.* Ca. 28

FINIS.

Quaſſatâ (Lector) quid arundine vilius, aut te?
At non frangeris, ſi pius, unctus ait.

G. J.

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